Did Abu Bakr Really Lead the Salat?

A Facts Check



Toyib Olawuyi

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

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:Writer

Toyib Olawuyi

:Published in print

Almas

:Digital Publisher

Ghaemiyeh center of computerized researches

Contents

Did Abu Bakr Really Lead The Salat

BOOK ID

Author(s): Toyib Olawuyi

Category: Companions Early Islamic History

Topic Tags: Caliphate Miscellaneous information:nbsp;Did Abu Bakr Really Lead The Salat? - A Facts Check

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ISBN-۱۳: ۹۷۸-۱۵۰۵۶۰۹۴۶۲

ISBN-۱۰: ۱۵۰۵۶۰۹۴۶۱

إنما كانت بيعه أبی بكر فلته وتمت

ألا وإنها قد كانت كذلك

ولكن الله وقی شرها

Person Tags: Abu Bakr

point

A Facts CheckIn this book, the author is thoroughly investigating the Sunni reports on the alleged leadership of salat by Abu Bakr during the fatal illness of the Messenger. He will be analyzing the bewildering contradictions between the so-called "sahih" Sunni ahadith on the claim; and he will be questioning the historicity of the whole episode. In particular, he will be examining the correct implications of leadership in salat, according to orthodox Sunni Islam. Does it indicate superiority? Does it confer the khilafah? Do our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah really have any case, even if the

?tale about Abu Bakr had been true

Dedication

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

This research is dedicated to the master

,of all prophets, messengers and Imams

,Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah

sallallahu ‘alaihi wa alihi

.

Acknowledgments

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Special thanks to Tural Islam, Ali Baker, Aneela Sultan, Jafar Mer and Ahmad Olawuyi. May Allah bless them all and all our loving brothers and sisters from the Shi’ah .Imamiyyah and the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah

Preface

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

:Let us imagine that an authentic hadith of the Prophet, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa alihi, reads

أبو بكر خليفتى فى كل مؤمن من بعدى

Abu Bakr is my khalifah over every

.believer after me

?How would the Ahl al-Sunnah have interpreted it

:What about this one

أبو بكر ولی كل مؤمن بعدی

.Abu Bakr is the wali of every believer after me

:Or this

أبو بكر أخی وصاحبی ووارثی ووزيری

.Abu Bakr is my brother, and my companion, and my inheritor and my wazir

We have absolutely no doubt that the Ahl al-Sunnah would cite these statements as unassailable proofs of Abu Bakr's legitimate khilafah over the Ummah immediately after the Messenger of Allah. However, as we have discussed in our second book, On the Khilafah of 'Ali over Abu Bakr, the above ahadith and similar others actually exist with reliable chains in the Sunni books – except that instead of "Abu Bakr", it is the name of Amir al-Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib, 'alaihi al-salam, that is mentioned in them. .This is why the Ahl al-Sunnah do not like, and always struggle against, them

When we quote the actual ahadith with the name of 'Ali to our Sunni brothers, they usually instinctively respond with a tired counterargument: the Prophet deputized Abu Bakr to lead the salat during his fatal illness. To them, that, in a weird way, is a stronger, and more explicit, proof of khilafah than any of the ahadith about 'Ali! Apparently, the world is indeed a very strange place. When the Messenger of Allah said " 'Ali is my khalifah over every believer after me", Sunnis think he was NOT naming 'Ali as his khalifah! But, when he allegedly appointed Abu Bakr to lead salat as

he had similarly appointed many others before him – to our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah - he was somehow naming him his khalifah!

In this book, we are thoroughly investigating the Sunni reports on the alleged leadership of salat by Abu Bakr during the fatal illness of the Messenger. We will be analyzing the bewildering contradictions between the so-called “sahih” Sunni ahadith on the claim; and we will be questioning the historicity of the whole episode. In particular, we will be examining the correct implications of leadership in salat, according to orthodox Sunni Islam. Does it indicate superiority? Does it confer the khilafah? Do our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah really have any case, even if the tale about Abu Bakr had been true?

We seek Allah’s Help in this effort, and we implore Him to forgive us all our mistakes in it, and to accept it as a worthy act of ‘ibadah. And may Allah send His salawat and barakat upon our master, Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allah, and upon his purified offspring.

۱. An Exclusive “Merit”?

Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. ۷۲۸ H) says:

وكـان إذا سـافر عن المـدينه اسـتخلف من يسـتخلفه يصـلى بالمسـلمين كمـا اسـتخلف ابن أم مكتوم تاره وعليا تاره فى الصـلاه واستخلف غيرهما تاره

فأمـا فى حـال غيبته ومرضه فلم يسـتخلف إلا أبا بكر لا عليا ولا غيره واسـتخلافه للصـديق فى الصـلاه متواتر ثابت فى الصـحاح والسنن والمساند من غير وجه

Whenever he (the Prophet) left Madinah on a journey, he would appoint a khalifah (to govern the city on his behalf). Whoever he

appointed as a khalifah would lead the Muslims in salat, as he once made Ibn Umm Maktum a khalifah, and also ‘Ali once, to lead the salat. He equally appointed others .apart from them both as khalifahs at other times

However, during his absence or illness, he never appointed anyone as khalifah except Abu Bakr – neither ‘Ali nor anyone else. And his appointment of al-Siddiq as khalifah to lead salat is mutawatir, and authentically narrated in the Sahih books, and the Sunan books, and the Musnad books through many routes.(۱)

:Basically, our Shaykh confesses to the following points

۱. Abu Bakr was NOT the first or the only to lead Muslims in salat in the mosque of the .Prophet, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa alihi, in Madinah

۲. Amir al-Muminin ‘Ali, ‘alaihi al-salam, and Ibn Umm Maktum, raḍiyallahu ‘anhu, were among those Sahabah, raḍiyallahu ‘anhum, who also led the Muslims in salat in .that mosque on the order of the Messenger of Allah

:But, our Shaykh then proceeds to make some garbled remarks

i. Abu Bakr was the only one ever deputized to lead salat in the mosque of the Prophet .during his absence from Madinah

ii. He was also the only one ever commanded to lead the salat in that mosque during .the Messenger’s illness

Somehow, Ibn Taymiyyah thinks that these were “exclusive merits” of his first khalifah, Abu Bakr. But, when the Messenger of Allah appointed Imam ‘Ali, Ibn Umm Maktum and others as khalifahs over his Madinah, was he then not also “absent” from !?the city

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۱- Abu al-‘Abbas Ahmad b. ‘Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Qurtubah; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۶ H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad

Rashad Salim], vol. ٨, p. ٥٥٨

:The Shaykh himself answers

وكان إذا سافر عن المدينه استخلف من يستخلفه يصلى بالمسلمين

Whenever he (the Prophet) LEFT MADINAH on a journey, he would appoint a khalifah (to govern the city on his behalf). Whoever he appointed as a khalifah would lead the Muslims in Salat

With this admission, one wonders: on what basis then was Abu Bakr the only one ever appointed khalifah to lead salat in Madinah during the Prophet's absence? How on earth did that submission of Ibn Taymiyyah even ever make any sense to him at all?! Why do these people suddenly lose their simple logic whenever discussions involving ?Amir al-Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib come up

As for our Shaykh's insistence on the "uniqueness" of Abu Bakr's khilafah in salat during the Prophet's illness, then, there are two issues. One, as we will demonstrate in this book, there is NO reliable proof of it - to begin with! All that our Sunni brothers can muster together are nothing but a set of severely contradictory riwayat which only muddle up the entire picture. Such kinds of irreconcilable reports are never accepted as valid testimonies. Two, even if it is agreed, for the sake of argument, that Abu Bakr ever led the salat on the order of the Prophet, then there is very little "merit" in it for him, if any at all. He then would have been a khalifah in salat only, which was the weakest form of khilafah. He would have had no authority whatsoever to give commands

to the Muslim soldiers, or to administer the Muslim society, or to pass judgments in disputes. Basically, he had no administrative, military or judicial authority in his alleged khilafah. By contrast, when Amir al-Muminin was made the khalifah of Madinah by the Messenger during the Battle of Tabuk, the former had full authority to lead Muslims in salat in the Prophet's mosque, command the Muslim armed forces stationed with him in the city, administer the affairs of its inhabitants and give judgments in any disputes that arose among them! How can anyone rationally consider the largely empty khilafah of Abu Bakr as superior to that of 'Ali? How do these people reason?

The issue of Abu Bakr's alleged appointment as prayer-leader is usually raised by our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah in debates over khilafah. Their logic always is – since the Prophet deputized Abu Bakr to lead the salat in his mosque, then he was automatically declaring the latter, implicitly, as his khalifah after his death. However, even Ibn Taymiyyah is unable to completely ignore the fallacy of this mainstream Sunni premise:

ليس كل من يصلح للاستخلاف فى الحياه على بعض الأمه يصلح إن يستخلف بعد الموت فإن النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم استخلف فى حياته غير واحد و منهم من لا يصلح للخلافه بعد موته

Not all who are qualified to be appointed khalifahs during the lifetime (of the Muslim ruler) over part of the Ummah are equally qualified to be appointed as khalifahs after the death (of the ruler).

p: ۶

The Prophet, peace be upon him, appointed during his lifetime many people as khalifahs, and among them were those who were not qualified for the khilafah after (his death.(١)

(A Game of Contradictions (Part ١ .٢

point

There actually is no valid Sunni proof to establish that Abu Bakr was ever deputized by the Messenger, sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi, as prayer-leader during the latter's fatal or other illness. The reports about Abu Bakr's alleged appointment were narrated mainly by both Umm al-Muminin 'Aishah and Anas. Most of the reports on the matter trace directly to them both, and to 'Aishah in particular. There were other Sahabah – such as Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, Buraydah, Salim b. 'Ubayd, and Ibn Zam'a. However, their reports were mostly carbon copies of the severely contradictory riwayat of both 'Aishah and Anas. In this chapter, we will be dissecting primarily the narrations of 'Aishah and Anas – and by extension, those of all the others too. We will be exposing their extreme weakness as valid proofs in the .issue at hand

Imam Muslim (d. ٢۶١ H) has compiled many of these reports under the chapter: "The Imam is authorized to appoint someone as khalifah who will lead the people in salat when there is a valid reason for it, for example illness, or journey or others. And whoever performs salat behind a sitting Imam who is unable to stand should do so standing if he can. And there is an abrogation of performing salat sitting behind a sitting

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Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah - ١ al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Qurtubah; ١st edition, ١۴٠۶ H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad Rashad Salim], vol. ٧, p. ٣٣٩

Imam for whoever is able to stand." So, we will be examining the landmark reports in .it in this investigative research

Exhibit A

:Muslim records

حدثنا محمد بن المثنى وهارون بن عبدالله قالا حدثنا عبدالصمد قال سمعت أبى يحدث قال حدثنا عبدالعزيز عن أنس قال لم يخرج إلينا نبى الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ثلاثا فأقيمت الصلاه فذهب أبو بكر يتقدم فقال نبى الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بالحجاب فرفعه فلما وضح لنا وجه نبى الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ما نظرنا منظرا قط كان أعجب إلينا من وجه النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم حين وضح لنا قال فأومأ نبى الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بيده إلى أبى بكر أن يتقدم وأرخى نبى الله صلى الله عليه و سلم الحجاب فلم نقدر عليه حتى مات

Muhammad b. Al-Muthanna and Harun b. 'Abd Allah – 'Abd al-Samad – my father – :'Abd al-'Aziz – Anas

The Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, did not come out to us for three days. When the salat was about to start, ABU BAKR STEPPED FORWARD TO LEAD. The Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, was near the curtain and he lifted it. When the face of the Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, became visible to us, we had never seen anything as wonderful to us as the face of the Prophet, peace be upon him when it became visible to us. So, the Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, gestured to Abu Bakr with his hand to lead. The Prophet

of Allah, peace be upon him, then drew the curtain, and we were unable to see him (until he died.(١)

This report explicitly states that the Messenger of Allah was unable to lead the Sahabah in salat for a total of four days – the initial three days and his day of death. Basically, he did not participate in salat with the Muslims in his mosque throughout the .last four days of his lifetime

Exhibit B

In another report, Anas indicated that the Messenger died on a Monday. Muslim again :documents

حدثنى عمرو الناقد وحسن الحلوانى وعبد بن حميد (قال عبد أخبرنى وقال الآخران حدثنا يعقوب) (وهو ابن إبراهيم بن سعد) وحدثنى أبى عن صالح عن ابن شهاب قال أخبرنى أنس بن مالك أن أبا بكر كان يصلى لهم فى وجع رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم الذى توفى فيه حتى إذا كان يوم الاثنين وهم صفوف فى الصلاه كشف رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ستر الحجره فنظر إلينا وهو قائم كأن وجهه ورقه مصحف ثم تبسم رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ضاحكا قال فبهتنا ونحن فى الصلاه من فرج بخروج رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ونكص أبو بكر على عقبيه ليصل الصف وظن أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم خارج للصلاه فأشار إليهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بيده أن أتموا صلاتكم قال ثم دخل رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فأرخى الستر قال فتوفى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من يومه ذلك

Amr al-Naqid, Hasan al-Halwani and ‘Abd b. Hamid‘

Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: -١ Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad ‘Abd al-Baqi], vol. ١, p. ٣١٥, (٤١٩ (١٠٠

:Ya'qub b. Ibrahim b. Sa'd – my father – Salih – Ibn Shihab – Anas b. Malik –

Abu Bakr led them in salat during the fatal illness of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, UNTIL IT WAS A MONDAY and they had stood in congregational rows PERFORMING salat. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, drew aside the curtain of the room and looked at us while he was standing. His face was like the page of the mushaf. Then, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, felt happy and smiled. And we were confounded with joy DURING THE SALAT due to the coming out of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Abu Bakr stepped back upon his heels to continue the salat in the congregational row, thinking that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, had come out for the salat. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, gestured to them with his hand to "complete your salat". Then, the .Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, entered and drew the curtain

(He (Anas) said: The Messenger of Allah breathed his last ON THAT VERY DAY of his.(١

This hadith is interesting. Anas made it absolutely clear that they were already in their congregational rows, before the appearance of ,(فی الصلاه) performing the salat the Prophet. Yet, the Sahabah were able, during salat, to see the Messenger of Allah draw the curtain, to view his bright face and his happy smile, to witness

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Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: -١ Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ١, p. ٣١۵, (۴١٩ (٩٨

how Abu Bakr stepped back, to notice how the Prophet's hand gesture to him, and to look at him returning to his room. What kind of salat was that?! Where were they ?really looking during the prayer? Were they even concentrating at all

:Muslim has this further riwayah as well

وحدثنيه عمرو الناقد وزهير بن حرب قالا حدثنا سفيان بن عيينه عن الزهرى عن أنس قال آخر نظره نظرتها إلى رسول الله عليه وسلم كشف الستاره يوم الاثنين

:Amr al-Naqid and Zuhayr b. Harb – Sufyan b. 'Uyaynah – al-Zuhri – Anas'

The last glance which we had of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was (when he drew the curtain aside ON MONDAY.(١

Therefore, the Prophet did not participate in congregational salat on Monday, the day of his death. He also did not pray in his mosque throughout the three days before that. That means that he stopped leading his Sahabah on Thursday, most probably in its afternoon or evening. So, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, he did not come out to his followers at all. On Monday, the day he died, he showed himself to them but did not join them in the salat. The direct implication of all this is that his last ever salat with his .Sahabah was offered on Thursday

:Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir (d. ٧٧۴ H) agrees with our conclusions

قلنا فعلى هذا يكون آخر صلاه صلاها معهم الظهر كما جاء مصرحا به فى حديث عائشه المتقدم، ويكون ذلك يوم الخميس لا يوم السبت ولا يوم الأحد كما حكاه البيهقى

(Ibid, vol. ١, p. ٣١۵, ۴١٩ (٩٩ -١

عن مغازى موسى بن عقبه وهو ضعيف

We say: based upon this, the last salat which he performed with them would be Zuhr, as it is explicitly reported in the foregoing hadith of ‘Aishah, and that would be on Thursday – and not on Saturday or Sunday as al-Bayhaqi quoted from Maghazi of (Musa b. ‘Uqbah, and it (i.e. that submission of Musa) is ḍa’if.(١

:Imam al-Salihi al-Shami (d. ٩٤٢ H) has a backup for him

قال الحافظ :اختلف فى مده مرضه، فالأكثر على أنه ثلاثه عشر يوما وقيل :بزياده يوم وقيل :بنقصه .وقيل :تسعه أيام رواه البلاذرى عن على رضى الله تعالى عنه وقيل :عشره، وفيه جزم سليمان التيمى، وكان يخرج إلى الصلاه إلا أنه انقطع ثلاثه أيام .قال فى العيون :أمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يصلى بالناس فصلى بهم فيما روينا سبع عشره صلاه

Al-Hafiz (Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani) said: “There is disagreement about the length of his (i.e. the Prophet’s fatal) illness. The majority are of the opinion that it lasted thirteen days. Some say: it was a day more. Some say: it was a day less.” Some also say: it was nine days. This opinion was narrated from ‘Ali, may Allah the Most High be pleased with him, by al-Baladhari. Some say: it lasted ten days. This was explicitly stated by .Sulayman al-Tamimi

He (the Prophet) used to come out for the salat (throughout his illness) except that he .missed three days

The author of al-‘Uyun said: “The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, ordered (that he (Abu Bakr

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١- Abu al-Fida Isma’il b. Kathir al-Dimashqi, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah (Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi; ١st edition, ١٤٠٨ H) [annotator: ‘Ali Shiri], vol. ٥, p. ٢٥٦

lead the people in salat, and he led them in seventeen salats, according to what was (narrated to us."(١)

One glaring omission from Anas' reports is that of any explicit order from the Prophet concerning Abu Bakr's leadership of salat. As such, we do not know – from Anas' narrations – whether he led the Sahabah in salat from Thursday till Monday on the order of the Messenger of Allah or not. What is clear from them, however, is that the Prophet was allegedly pleased with Abu Bakr's leadership of salat when he saw it on the Monday of his demise. This is also the best – based upon Anas' reports above – that can be said about Abu Bakr's leadership of salat for the three previous days: that the Prophet knew about it, and silently approved it by not objecting. Nothing more can be claimed from those texts. Of course, an approval is not always the same thing as .an order

Exhibit C

Ibn Kathir makes reference to a hadith of Umm al-Muminin 'Aishah. This is it, as :recorded by Imam Muslim

حدثنا أحمد بن عبدالله بن يونس حدثنا زائده حدثنا موسى بن أبى عائشه عن عبيدالله بن عبدالله قال دخلت على عائشه فقلت لها ألا تحدثينى عن مرض رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم؟ قالت بلى ثقل النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم فقال أصلى الناس ؟ قلنا لا وهم ينتظرونك يا رسول الله قال ضعوا لى ماء فى المخضب ففعلنا فاغتسل ثم ذهب لينوء فأغمى عليه ثم أفاق فقال أصلى الناس

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١ - Muhammad b. Yusuf al-Salihi al-Shami, Subul al-Huda al-Rashad fi Sirah Khayr al-'Ibad (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; ١st edition, ١٤١٤ H) [annotators: 'Adil Ahmad 'Abd al-Mawjud and 'Ali Muhammad Ma'ud], vol. ١٢, p. ٢٤٤

؟ قلنـا لاـ وهم ينتظرونـك يـا رسول الله فقال ضـعوا لى ماء فى المخضب ففعلنا فاغتسل ثم ذهب لينوء فأغمى عليه ثم أفاق فقال أصـلى الناس ؟ قلنا لا وهم ينتظرونك يا رسول الله فقال ضـعوا لى ماء فى المخضب ففعلنا فاغتسل ثم ذهب لينوء فأغمى عليه ثم أفاق فقال أصلى الناس ؟ فقلنا لا وهم ينتظرونك يا رسول الله

قالت والناس عكوف فى المسجد ينتظرون رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم لصلاه العشاء الآخره

قالت فأرسل رسول الله صـلى الله عليه و سـلم إلى أبى بكر أن يصلى بالناس فأتاه الرسول فقال إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يأمرك أن تصلى بالناس فقال أبو بكر وكان رجلا رقيقا يا عمر صل بالناس قال فقال عمر أنت أحق بذلك

قالت فصلى بهم أبو بكر تلك الأيام ثم إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم وجد من نفسه خفه فخرج بين رجلين أحدهما العباس لصـلاه الظهر وأبو بكر يصـلى بالنـاس فلما رآه أبو بكر ذهب ليتأخر فأومأ إليه النبى صـلى الله عليه و سـلم أن لا يتأخر وقال لهما أجلسانى إلى جنبه فأجلساه إلى جنب أبو بكر وكان أبو بكر يصـلى وهو قائم بصـلاه النبى صـلى الله عليه و سـلم والناس يصـلون بصلاه أبى بكر والنبى صلى الله عليه السلام قاعد

قال عبيدالله فدخلت على عبدالله بن عباس فقلت له ألا أعرض عليك ما حدثتنى عائشه عن مرض رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ؟ فقال هات فعرضت حديثها عليه فما أنكر منه شيئا غير أنه قال أسمت لك الرجل الذى كان مع العباس؟ قلت لا قال هو على

.Ahmad b

:Abd Allah b. Yunus – Zaidah – Musa b. Abi ‘Aishah – ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Abd Allah‘

I visited ‘Aishah and said to her, “Would you tell me about the illness of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him?” She replied, “Yes, I will. The Prophet, peace be upon him, was seriously ill, and he asked, ‘Have the people performed salat?’ We said, ‘No, they are waiting for you (to lead them), O Messenger of Allah’. He said, ‘Put some water for me in the tub’. We complied. So, he performed ablution. Then, he was about to move with difficulty but fainted. Then, he woke up and said, ‘Have the people performed salat?’ We said, ‘No. They are waiting for you, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘Put some water for me in the tub’. We complied. So, he performed ablution. Then, he was about to move with difficulty but fainted. Then, he woke up and said, ‘Have the people performed salat?’ We said, ‘No. They are waiting for you, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘Put some water for me in the tub’. We complied. So, he performed ablution. Then, he was about to move with difficulty but fainted. Then, he woke up and said, ‘Have the people performed salat?’ We said, ‘No. They are waiting for you, O Messenger of Allah’.

She (‘Aishah) said, “The people were standing in the mosque waiting for the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, FOR THE ‘ISHA PRAYER”.

She (‘Aishah) said, “Then, the

Messenger of Allah sent a messenger to Abu Bakr to tell him to lead the people in salat. When the messenger (of the Prophet) got to him, he said, 'The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, orders you to lead the people in salat.' So, Abu Bakr, who was a man of tenderly feelings, said, 'O 'Umar, lead the people in salat.' 'Umar replied, '.'You are more entitled to that

She ('Aishah) said, 'So, Abu Bakr led them in salat during those days. THEN, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, felt some relief and he went out, supported by two men, one of whom was al-'Abbas, FOR THE ZUHR PRAYER while Abu Bakr was already leading the people in salat. When Abu Bakr saw him, he began to move backwards. But the Prophet, peace be upon him, indicated to him not to move backwards. He also told them both (i.e. the two men with him), 'Sit me beside Abu Bakr.' Therefore, they sat him beside Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr was performing salat while standing, and he was following the salat of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and the people were following the salat of Abu Bakr. The Prophet, peace be upon him, was ".sitting

Ubayd Allah said: I visited 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbas and said to him, "Should I tell you what' 'Aishah told me concerning the illness of the Messenger of Allah?" He said, "Tell." So, I presented her hadith to him, and he did not deny

anything from it, except that he asked, “Did she tell you the name of the other man (who was with al-‘Abbas?” I said, “No”. He said, “He was ‘Ali.”(1)

But, ‘Aishah has only blown up everything here! The Messenger of Allah became unable to lead salat on Thursday, according to the hadith of Anas. In this report of ‘Aishah, that was at the time of the ‘Isha prayer – and not Zuhr as al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir wants us to believe. That ‘Isha prayer, as well as the subsequent salats for a few days, were led by Abu Bakr on the explicit order of the Prophet. These are claims of ‘Aishah which are missing in the reports of Anas. But, according to Anas, the Messenger of Allah never again joined the Muslims in salat once Abu Bakr started leading.

By contrast, ‘Aishah claimed that her blessed husband actually took over the leadership of salat from her father after some “days”! In the Arabic, the word ayam is used for the days of Abu Bakr’s leadership after the initial ‘Isha. That word is plural, and refers to at least three days. This means that Abu Bakr led the salats on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Then, the Prophet of Allah intervened in his salat and took over from him on Monday. Here, Anas and ‘Aishah clash again. He submitted that the Messenger never participated in congregational salat on the Monday of his death, while she insisted that her husband did in the Zuhr prayer of

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۱- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad ‘Abd al-Baqi], vol. ۱, p. ۳۱۱, (۹۰ (۴۱۸)

!that day

Exhibit D

Yet, 'Aishah proceeded to contradict herself too in a very fundamental way. Muslim :records

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبى شيبه حدثنا أبو معاويه ووكيع ح وحدثنا يحيى بن يحيى (واللفظ له) قال أخبرنا أبو معاويه عن الأعمش عن إبراهيم عن الأسود عن عائشه قالت لما ثقل رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم جاء بلال يؤذنه بالصلاه فقال مرو أبا بكر فليصل بالناس قالت فقلت يا رسول الله إن أبا بكر رجل أسيف وإنه متى يقم مقامك لا يسمع الناس فلو أمرت عمر فقال مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس قالت فقلت لحفصه قولى له إن أبا بكر رجل أسيف وإنه متى يقم مقامك لا يسمع الناس فلو أمرت عمر فقالت له فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إنكن لأنتن صواحب يوسف مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس قالت فأمروا أبا بكر يصلى بالناس قالت فلما دخل فى الصلاه وجد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من نفسه خفه فقام يهادى بين رجلين ورجلاه تخطان فى الأرض قالت فلما دخل المسجد سمع أبو بكر حسه ذهب يتأخر فأومأ إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قم مكانك فجاء رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم حتى جلس عن يسار أبى بكر قالت فكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يصلى بالناس جالسا وأبو بكر قائما يقتدى أبو بكر بصلاه النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم ويقتدى الناس بصلاه أبى بكر

Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah – Abu Mu'awiyah and Waki' AND Yahya b. Yahya – Abu :Mu'awiyah – al-A'mash - Ibrahim – al-Aswad – 'Aishah

When the Messenger of

Allah became seriously ill, Bilal came to summon him to salat. He said, "Ask Abu Bakr ".to lead the people in salat

She said: I said, "O Messenger of Allah! Verily, Abu Bakr is a tenderly man. If he stood in your place, he would not be able to make the people hear anything. You should ".instead order 'Umar." He said, "Ask Abu Bakr to lead the people in salat

She said: "So, I told Hafsah my statement to him, 'Abu Bakr is a tenderly man. If he stood in your place, he would not be able to make people hear anything. You should instead order 'Umar." She told him. On that, the Messenger of Allah said, "You are like ".the women who gathered around Yusuf. Ask Abu Bakr to lead the people in salat

She said: "Therefore, Abu Bakr was asked to lead the people in salat." She said: "As he (Abu Bakr) began the salat, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, felt some relief. So, He got up and moved, supported by two men, and his feet dragged on the .ground

She said: "When he entered the mosque, Abu Bakr heard his sound. He moved backwards, but the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, indicated to him to 'stand in your place.' The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, then came and sat on the ".left side of Abu Bakr

She said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was leading the people in salat in a sitting

posture. Abu Bakr was following the salat of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in a (standing posture and the people were following the salat of Abu Bakr.(١)

:The contradictions between this report and Exhibit C above are tremendous

١. According to Exhibit C, Bilal did not come to summon the Prophet for salat. In Exhibit D, he came.

٢. According to Exhibit C, the Messenger of Allah attempted to join the Muslims in the mosque but fainted three times. In Exhibit D, the Prophet did not faint at all, and made no attempt whatsoever to join his followers in his mosque.

٣. According to Exhibit C, the Prophet only ordered Abu Bakr to lead the salat after three failed attempts to do so by himself. In Exhibit D, he gave the order immediately Bilal came to him, without making any attempt to lead the salat by himself.

۴. According to Exhibit C, the Prophet sent a specific messenger to Abu Bakr to lead the Salat. Moreover, Abu Bakr too offered the "honour" to 'Umar, who politely turned it down. However, in Exhibit D, the Messenger of Allah did not send any specific messenger to Abu Bakr. Rather, he only gave a general order to inform Abu Bakr to lead the salat. Besides, Abu Bakr did not offer the "honour" to 'Umar.

۵. According to Exhibit C, 'Aishah did not object to the Prophet's order to Abu Bakr to lead the salat. However, in Exhibit D, she allegedly fiercely objected to it.

۶. According to Exhibit C,

١- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ١, p. ٣١١, (٩۵ (۴١٨

after the Prophet's order to Abu Bakr to lead the salat, he continued to do so for days, till Monday before the Messenger of Allah felt a relief and "took over" an already ongoing salat from him. In Exhibit D, the Prophet felt a relief and "took over" from Abu Bakr, on that same Thursday, only minutes after giving his order to him to lead the salat! 'Aishah's "frantic" objection to Abu Bakr's appointment, especially the text of her arguments - as narrated in Exhibit D - shows that Abu Bakr had never led Muslims !in salat before then

According to Exhibit C, Abu Bakr led the salat for several days before the Prophet's .٧ intervention. By contrast, in Exhibit D, Abu Bakr did not even lead a single salat before !the take-over

According to Exhibit C, the Messenger – on his order - was taken by two men to the .٨ side of Abu Bakr. But, in Exhibit D, the Prophet went to the left side of Abu Bakr by .himself, with no support

!?What exactly are we supposed to believe from all these terrible contradictions

(A Game Of Contradictions (Part ٢ .٣

point

.Suddenly, the whole drama gets out of hand

Exhibit E

Ibn Zam'a makes things much worse with his own set of new contradictions! Imam :Abu Dawud (d. ٢٧٥ H) records

حدثنا عبد الله بن محمد النفيلي ثنا محمد بن سلمه عن محمد بن إسحاق قال حدثني الزهري قال حدثني عبد الملك بن أبي بكر بن عبد الرحمن بن الحارث بن هشام عن أبيه عن عبد الله بن زمعه قال

لما استعز برسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم وأنا عنده فى نفر من المسلمين دعاه بلال إلى الصلاه فقال مروا من يصلى للناس فخرج عبد الله بن زمعه فإذا عمر فى الناس وكان أبو بكر غائبا فقلت يا عمر قم فصل بالناس فتقدم فكبر فلما سمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم صوته وكان عمر رجلا مجهرا قال " فأين أبو بكر ؟ يأبى الله ذلك والمسلمون يأبى الله ذلك والمسلمون " فبعث إلى أبى بكر فجاء بعد أن صلى عمر تلك الصلاه فصلى بالناس .

Abd Allah b. Muhammad al-Nufayli – Muhammad b. Salamah – Muhammad b. Ishaq –' al-Zuhri – 'Abd al-Malik b. Abi Bakr b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Harith b. Hisham – his :father – 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a

When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was seriously ill, and I, with a number of Muslims, was with him, Bilal summoned him to salat. He said, "Tell SOMEONE to lead the people in salat." So, 'Abd Allah b. Sam'a went out (into the mosque), and found 'Umar. Meanwhile, Abu Bakr was absent. I said, "O 'Umar! Get up and lead the people in salat." Therefore, he stepped forward and made the takbir (thereby starting the congregational salat). When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, heard his voice, and 'Umar was a man with a loud voice, he (the Prophet) said, "Where is Abu Bakr? Allah and the Muslims forbid that (i.e. the leadership of ".'Umar in salat). Allah and the Muslims reject that

As such, he sent a messenger to Abu Bakr. HE CAME AFTER ‘UMAR HAD PERFORMED THAT SALAT. Then, he (Abu Bakr) led the people in salat (again).(١)

‘Allamah al-Albani (d. ١٤٢٠ H) comments:

حسن صحيح

(Hasan sahih.(٢)

Abu Dawud also records a supplementary report, which gives further details:

حدثنا أحمد بن صالح ثنا ابن أبى فديك قال حدثنى موسى بن يعقوب عن عبد الرحمن بن إسحاق عن ابن شهاب عن عبيد الله بن عبد الله بن عتبه أن عبد الله بن زمعه أخبره بهذا الخبر قال لما سمع النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم صوت عمر قال ابن زمعه خرج النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم حتى أطلع رأسه من حجرته ثم قال " لا لا لا ليصل للناس ابن أبى قحافه " يقول ذلك مغضبا .

Ahmad b. Salih – Ibn Abi Fudayk – Musa b. Ya’qub – ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Ishaq – Ibn Shihab – ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Utbah – ‘Abd Allah b. Zam’a:

When the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard the voice of ‘Umar, the Prophet, peace be upon him, went out until his head appeared from his room. Then, he said, “No. No. No. Certainly, it is the son of Abu Quhafah (i.e. Abu Bakr) that shall lead the people in salat.” He was saying it in a state of ANGER.(٣)

Al-Albani says:

صحيح

(Sahih(٤)

It is interesting. Is it not? The Prophet, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa alihi, allegedly knew that it was haram for anyone other than Abu Bakr to lead the salat. Yet, he ordered them to tell “someone” to do so?!

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١ - Abu Dawud Sulayman b. al-Ash’ath al-Sijistani al-Azdi, Sunan (Dar al-Fikr)

[annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, p. ۶۲۷, ۴۶۶۰

۲- Ibid

۳- Ibid, vol. ۲, p. ۶۲۷, ۴۶۶۱

۴- Ibid

Was it not his mission to “deliver the message clearly”?[1] So, what was he allegedly angry about exactly? According to this Sunni riwayah, it was the Prophet himself who caused the confusion – and may Allah protect us from such blasphemous thoughts! So, logically, none was to blame except him. Thus, why was he angry, and at whom? What is this drama which the Ahl al-Sunnah have attributed to the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds?! In any case, this report of Ibn Zam’a opens a new can of worms for our Sunni brothers, which severely complicate an already horrible situation.

Exhibit F

In order to analyze the reports of Ibn Zam’a, we must first pinpoint them within a specific timescale. So, this hadith of Imam Ahmad (d. ۲۴۱ H) comes in handy:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا عبد الأعلى عن معمر عن الزهري عن عبيد الله بن عبد الله عن عائشة قالت لما مرض رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم في بيت ميمونه فاستأذن نساءه ان يمرض في بيتي فأذن له فخرج رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم معتمدا على العباس وعلى رجل آخر ورجلاه تخطان في الأرض وقال عبيد الله فقال بن عباس أتدرى من ذلك الرجل هو على بن أبي طالب ولكن عائشه لا تطيب لها نفسا قال الزهري فقال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم وهو في بيت ميمونه لعبد الله بن زمعه مر الناس فليصلوا فلقي عمر بن الخطاب فقال يا عمر صل بالناس فصلى بهم فسمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم صوته

۱- See Qur’an ۵:۹۲, ۱۴:۴, ۱۶:۴۴, ۱۶:۶۴, ۲۴:۵۴ and ۶۴:۱۲

فعرفه وكـان جهير الصوت فقـال رسول الله صـلى الله عليه و سـلم أليس هـذا صوت عمر قـالوا بلى قـال يـأبى الله جـل وعز ذلك والمؤمنون مروا أبـا بكر فليصـل بالنـاس قـالت عـائشه يـا رسول الله ان أبا بكر رجل رقيق لا يملك دمعه وانه إذا قرأ القرآن بكى قالت وما قلت ذلك الا كراهيه ان يتأثم الناس بأبى بكر ان يكون أول من قام مقام رسول الله صـلى الله عليه و سـلم فقال مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس فراجعته فقال مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس انكم صواحب يوسف

Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – 'Abd al-A'la – Ma'mar – al-Zuhri' :– 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah – 'Aishah

When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, became ill in the house of Maymunah, he sought the permission of his wives to stay in my house during his illness. So, they permitted him. Then, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, came out (of Maymunah's room) supported by al-'Abbas and another man and his .feet were dragging on the ground

Ubayd Allah said: "Ibn 'Abbas asked, 'Do you know that man? He was 'Ali b. Abi Talib.' "'.But, 'Aishah did not like him

Al-Zuhri (narrating from 'Ubayd Allah from 'Aishah) reported: The Prophet, peace be upon him, said while he was (still) in the house of Maymunah to 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a, "Tell THE PEOPLE to perform the salat." So, he met 'Umar b. al-Khattab and said, "O 'Umar! Lead the people in salat." Therefore, he led them

in salat. Then, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, heard his voice and recognized him, as he was someone with a loud voice. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, “Is that not the voice of ‘Umar?” They said, “Yes, it is.” He said, “Allah the Almighty and the believers forbid that. Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in salat.” ‘Aishah said, “O Messenger of Allah, verily, Abu Bakr is a tenderly man. He cannot control his tears. As he recites the Qur’an, he cannot help weeping.”

She (‘Aishah) said: “I did not say that except through worry that the people may take an evil omen with Abu Bakr, that he would become the first to occupy the position of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him.” He said, “Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in salat.” But, I dissuaded him. He said (again), “Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in Salat. You are like the women around Yusuf.”(١)

Shaykh al-Arnaut says:

إسناده صحيح على شرط الشيخين

Its chain is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs(٢)

So, it was before the Prophet moved to the house of ‘Aishah. This was during the initial stages of his fatal illness, at the start of his inability to join the congregational salats. That apparently was on Thursday. Imam Muslim (d. ٢٦١ H) records another hadith which confirms this:

حدثنا محمد بن رافع وعبد بن حميد (واللفظ لابن رافع) قالا حدثنا عبدالرزاق أخبرنا معمر قال قال الزهرى وأخبرنى عبيدالله بن

١- Abu ‘Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu’ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ٦, p. ٣٤, ٢٤١٠٧

٢- Ibid

عبدالله بن عتبه أن عائشه أخبرته قالت أول ما اشتکی رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم فی بیت میمونه فاستأذن أزواجه أن یمرض فی بیتها وأذن له قالت فخرج وید له علی الفضل بن عباس وید له علی رجل آخر وهو یخط برجلیه فی الأرض فقال عبیدالله فحدثت به ابن عباس فقال أتدری من الرجل الذی لم تسم عائشه ؟ هو علی

Muhammad b. Rafi' and 'Abd b. Hamid – 'Abd al-Razzaq – Ma'mar – al-Zuhri - 'Ubayd :Allah b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Utbah – 'Aishah

It was in the house of Maymunah that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him," first fell ill. He asked permission from his wives to stay in my house during his illness. ".They granted him permission

She said: "Then, he went out with one of his hands over (the shoulder of) 'al-Faḍl b. 'Abbas and the other hand on (the shoulder of) another man. His feet dragged on the .earth

Ubayd Allah said: "I narrated it to Ibn 'Abbas and he said, 'Do you know the man' (whose name 'Aishah did not mention? He was 'Ali."(١)

There is a fresh contradiction in these last two reports of 'Aishah. In the first, she claimed that the partner of Amir al-Muminin 'Ali, 'alaihi al-salam, when he was supporting the Messenger of Allah out of Umm al-Muminin Maymunah's room was al-'Abbas. In the second, she said that the same partner was al-Faḍl b. al-Abbas! .That, apparently, is an irreconcilable contradiction

One cannot help but notice the strange inconsistencies between the reports

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(Ibid, vol. ١, p. ٣١١, ۴١٨ (٩١ -١

of Zam'a and Exhibit F on the one hand and the other reports of 'Aishah and Anas (in :the last chapter) on the other

In one report, the Prophet gave the order that Abu Bakr - specifically naming him - .۱ should lead the salat immediately when Bilal came to him. However, in other reports, the Messenger only said, "Tell someone to lead the people in salat" or "Tell the people .to perform the salat" without naming Abu Bakr

In some reports, 'Umar was mistakenly chosen, by Ibn Zam'a or another .۲ messenger of the Prophet, to lead the salat, and he ('Umar) did so, before Abu Bakr. In other reports, 'Umar was never selected for leadership of the salat by any .messenger of the Prophet, and he ('Umar) never led it

In one report, after Abu Bakr's designation as the prayer leader, he went ahead to .۳ offer the position to 'Umar, who politely turned it down. By contrast, according to other reports, Abu Bakr never offered the position to 'Umar. Rather, 'Umar himself had already held the position, by mistake, before him! So, it would have been illogical .to ask him to lead the same salat again

By one report, Abu Bakr was one of those waiting in the mosque for the Messenger .۴ of Allah in the evening of Thursday. The messenger of the Prophet came to him in the mosque, while 'Umar too was present with him, to convey the order to lead. Meanwhile, in other reports, Abu Bakr was

absent from the mosque, while the other Muslims were waiting for salat! Where was he? What could he possibly be doing where he was? The messenger of the Prophet had to quickly locate him to bring him into the mosque so that he could take over from 'Umar who was already leading the salat by mistake. But, before Abu Bakr arrived, 'Umar had already finished.

At this point, let us make a final recap of the some of the words of 'Aishah concerning that same event, about that same 'Isha prayer of that same Thursday. This is the first one:

قالت والناس عكوف فى المسجد ينتظرون رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم لصلاه العشاء الآخره

قالت فأرسل رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إلى أبى بكر أن يصلى بالناس فأتاه الرسول فقال إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يأمرك أن تصلى بالناس فقال أبو بكر وكان رجلا رقيقا يا عمر صل بالناس قال فقال عمر أنت أحق بذلك

قالت فصلى بهم أبو بكر تلك الأيام

She ('Aishah) said, "The people were standing in the mosque waiting for the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, FOR THE 'ISHA PRAYER.

She ('Aishah) said, "So, the Messenger of Allah sent a messenger to Abu Bakr to tell him to lead the people in salat. When the messenger (of the Prophet) got to him, he said, 'The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, orders you to lead the people in salat.' So, Abu Bakr, who was a man of tenderly feelings, said, 'O 'Umar,

’.lead the people in salat.’ ‘Umar replied, ‘You are more entitled to that

.She (‘Aishah) said, ‘So, Abu Bakr led them in salat DURING THOSE DAYS

:This is her second claim on that same event

فأمروا أبا بكر يصلى بالناس قالت فلما دخل فى الصلاه وجد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من نفسه خفه فقام يهادى بين رجلين ورجلاه تخطان فى الأرض قالت فلما دخل المسجد سمع أبو بكر حسه ذهب يتأخر فأومأ إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قم مكانك فجاء رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم حتى جلس عن يسار أبى بكر قالت فكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يصلى بالناس جالسا وأبو بكر قائما يقتدى أبو بكر بصلاه النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم ويقتدى الناس بصلاه أبى بكر

She said: “Therefore, Abu Bakr was asked to lead the people in salat.” She said: “As he (Abu Bakr) began the salat, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, felt some relief. So, He got up and moved, supported by two men, and his feet dragged on the .ground

She said: “When he entered the mosque, Abu Bakr heard his sound. He moved backwards, but the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, indicated to him to ‘stand in your place.’ The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, then came and sat on the ”.left side of Abu Bakr

She said: “The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was leading the people in Salat .in a sitting posture

:Here, we have her third

فقال النبى صلى

الله عليه و سلم وهو فى بيت ميمونه لعبد الله بن زمعه مر الناس فليصلوا فلقى عمر بن الخطاب فقال يا عمر صل بالناس فصلى بهم فسمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم صوته فعرفه وكان جهير الصوت فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم أليس هذا صوت عمر قالوا بلى قال يأبى الله جل وعز ذلك والمؤمنون مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said while he was (still) in the house of Maymunah to 'Abd Allah b. Zam'a, "Tell the people to perform the salat." So, he met 'Umar b. al-Khattab and said, "O 'Umar! Lead the people in salat." Therefore, he led them in salat. Then, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, heard his voice and recognized him, as he was someone with a loud voice. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "Is that not the voice of 'Umar?" They said, "Yes, it is." He said, "Allah the Almighty and the believers forbid that. Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in Salat."

What exactly are we supposed to believe, O Umm al-Muminin 'Aishah?

۴. Did Abu Bakr Lead The Prophet?

point

As if the crisis is not bad enough yet, 'Aishah threw in one more unnerving contradiction into the mess.

Exhibit G

Imam Ibn Hibban (d. ۳۵۴ H) records about it:

أخبرنا محمد بن إسحاق بن خزيمه قال حدثنا محمد بن بشار قال حدثنا بدل بن المحبر قال حدثنا شعبه عن موسى بن أبى عائشه عن عبيد الله بن عبد الله عن عائشه أن أبا بكر صلى بالناس

ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى الصف خلفه

Muhammad b. Ishaq b. Khuzaymah – Muhammad b. Bashar – Badal b. al-Muhabbar – Shu'bah – Musa b. Abi 'Aishah – 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd Allah – 'Aishah:

Abu Bakr led the people in salat while the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, was in the congregational row BEHIND him.(١)

'Allamah al-Albani (d. ١۴٢٠ H) comments:

صحيح

Sahih(٢)

And, Shaykh al-Arnaut concurs:

إسناده صحيح على شرط البخارى

Its chain is sahih upon the standard of al-Bukhari.(٣)

Imam al-Tirmidhi (d. ٢٧٩ H) also documents:

حدثنا محمود بن غيلان حدثنا شبابه [بن سوار] عن شعبه عن نعيم بن أبى هند عن أبى وائل عن مسروق عن عائشه قال صلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم خلف أبى بكر فى مرضه الذى مات فيه قاعدا

Mahmud b. Ghilan – Shubabah b. Sawar – Shu'bah – Na'im b. Abi Hind – Abu Wail – Masruq – 'Aishah:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, performed salat in a sitting posture BEHIND Abu Bakr during his fatal illness.(۴)

Al-Tirmidhi says:

حديث عائشه حديث حسن صحيح غريب

The hadith of 'Aishah is hasan sahih gharib.(۵)

'Allamah al-Albani comments too:

صحيح

(Sahih(۶

When did this take place? At the best, one may only attempt to fix it either in the ‘Isha prayer of Thursday or in the Zuhr of Monday, the Prophet’s last day. By the narration of Anas, the Messenger of Allah did not step into the mosque at all on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday preceding his death. So, we are left with only the evening of Thursday, when he first stopped

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۱ – –Abu Hatim Muhammad b. Hibban b. Ahmad b. Hibban b. Mu’adh b. Ma’bad al-Tamimi al-Darimi al-Busti, Sahih Ibn Hibban bi Tartib Ibn Balban (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۱۴ H) [annotators: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani and Shu’ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ۵, p. ۴۸۳, ۲۱۱۷

۲- Ibid

۳- Ibid

۴ – –Abu ‘Isa Muhammad b. ‘Isa al-Sulami al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami’ al-Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, p. ۱۹۶, ۳۶۲

۵- Ibid

۶- Ibid

leading the salat and the Monday of his demise. According to one report of ‘Aishah, the Messenger of Allah took over the ‘Isha on Thursday, shortly after giving the order to Abu Bakr to lead it. But, in another narration by her, the Prophet actually never intervened in that ‘Isha at all, and Abu Bakr led it and all subsequent salats till the Zuhr of the following Monday. Yet, even on that Monday, Abu Bakr only prayed beside him as a surrogate Imam. As such, there really is nowhere to place this new claim of ‘Aishah – that her father was our Prophet’s Imam – within the possible timeframe.

However, Anas b. Malik made a frantic attempt to save her! Imam Ibn Hibban documents:

أخبرنا عمر بن محمـد الهمدانى قال حدثنا إسـحاق بن إبراهيم بن سويد الرملى قال حدثنا أيوب بن سـليمان قال حدثنى أبو بكر بن أبى أويس عن سليمان بن بلال عن حميد الطويل عن ثابت البنانى عن أنس بن مالك قال آخر صلاه صلاها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مع القوم فى ثوب واحد متوشحا به برد قاعدا خلف أبى بكر

‘Umar b. Muhammad al-Hamdani – Ishaq b. Ibrahim b. Suwayd al-Ramli – Ayub b. Sulayman – Abu Bakr b. Abi Uways – Sulayman b. Bilal – Humayd al-Tawil – Thabit al-Banani – Anas b. Malik:

The last salat performed by the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, with the people was done in a single garment wrapped around him in a sitting posture BEHIND Abu Bakr.(١)

‘Allamah al-Albani comments:

صحيح

Sahih(٢)

Shaykh

p: ٣٣

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١ - Abu Hatim Muhammad b. Hibban b. Ahmad b. Hibban b. Mu’adh b. Ma’bad al-Tamimi al-Darimi al-Busti, Sahih Ibn Hibban bi Tartib Ibn Balban (Beirut: Muasassat

al-Risalah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۱۴ H) [annotators: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani and Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ۵, p. ۴۹۶, ۲۱۲۵

Ibid -۲

:al-Arnaut agrees

إسناده صحيح

(Its chain is sahih(١

:Imam al-Tirmidhi also records

حدثنا عبد الله بن أبى زياد شبابه بن سوار حدثنا محمد بن طلحه عن حميد عن ثابت عن أنس قال صلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فى مرضه خلف أبى بكر قاعدا فى ثوب متوشحا به

Abd Allah b. Abi Ziyad - Shubabah b. Sawar – Muhammad b. Talhah – Humayd –‘ :Thabit – Anas

He (the Prophet), peace be upon him, during his illness, performed salat in a sitting (posture BEHIND Abu Bakr, wrapped in a garment.(٢

:Al-Tirmidhi comments

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

(This hadith is hasan sahih(٣

:Allamah al-Albani agrees‘

صحيح الإسناد

(Its chain is sahih(٤

So, it was the last congregational salat of the Prophet, after all. But, even Anas’ intervention rescues nothing! We still do not know when that last salat was. Anas himself narrated that the final congregational salat of the Messenger of Allah – and it was led by him, obviously before the ‘Isha prayer - was on Thursday, followed by three days when he never stepped into the mosque at all. On the Monday of his departure, he came into the mosque, but did not join the congregational salat. He retreated into his room, and that was the very last time his Sahabah saw him alive. He apparently died shortly after his appearance. Basically, it is practically impossible to fix

this alleged salat behind Abu Bakr anywhere within his lifetime!

There is another similarly unfixable riwayah by this same 'Aishah, concerning the same period. Imam al-Nasai (d. ٣٠٣ H) records:

أخبرنا محمود بن غيلان

١- Ibid

٢- - Abu 'Isa Muhammad b. 'Isa al-Sulami al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami' al-Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ٢, p. ١٩٧, ٣۶٣

٣- Ibid

۴- Ibid

قال حدثنی أبو داود قال أنبأنا شعبه عن موسی بن أبی عائشه قال سمعت عبید الله بن عبد الله یحدث عن عائشه رضی الله عنها أن رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم أمر أبا بکر أن یصلی بالناس قالت وکان النبی صلی الله علیه و سلم بین یدی أبی بکر فصلی قاعدا وأبو بکر یصلی بالناس والناس خلف أبی بکر

Mahmud b. Ghilan – Abu Dawud – Shu'bah – Musa b. Abi 'Aishah – 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Abd :Allah – 'Aishah, may Allah be pleased with her

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, ordered Abu Bakr to lead the people in“ ”.Salat

She said: “The Prophet, peace be upon him, was IN FRONT of Abu Bakr, and he performed the salat in a sitting posture while Abu Bakr led the people in salat and the (people were behind Abu Bakr.(۱

:Allamah al-Albani declares about it'

صحیح

(Sahih(۲

Where does this belong? Was it the 'Isha prayer of the Messenger's last Thursday? Well, 'Aishah herself had also narrated that he led that salat, sitting beside her father! Of course, Anas denied completely the Prophet's participation in that Isha' prayer or any other, from that period, till his death! 'Aishah also claimed in another report that the Prophet did not join the 'Isha prayer on that Thursday! But, what about the salat on the Monday of his death? Still, the problem adamantly persists. 'Aishah had narrated that her blessed husband led that salat beside Abu Bakr! He neither stayed in front of her father, nor behind

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۱- Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Ahmad b. Shu'ayb al-Nasai, al-Mujtaba min al-Sunan (Halab: Maktab al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyyah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۰۶ H) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, p. ۸۳, ۷۹۷

۲- Ibid

him. Therefore, it is once more impossible to fix another riwayah of Umm al-Muminin .'Aishah within the lifetime of her master and prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi

Understandably, the 'ulama of the Ahl al-Sunnah are very disturbed by these grave, irreconcilable inconsistencies in 'Aishah's, and of course Anas', reports. Al-Hafiz (d. ٨٥٢ :H) himself is unable to hide this fact

ورواه مسلم بن إبراهيم عن شعبه بلفظ أن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى خلف أبى بكر أخرجه بن المنذر وهذا عكس روايه أبى موسى وهو اختلاف شديد ووقع فى روايه مسروق عنها أيضا اختلاف فأخرجه ابن حبان من روايه عاصم عن شقيق عنه بلفظ كان أبو بكر يصلى بصلاته والناس يصلون بصلاه أبى بكر

Muslim b. Ibrahim narrated from Shu'bah with the wording, "The Prophet, peace be upon him, performed salat behind Abu Bakr". Al-Mundhir recorded it. This is in contrast to the narration of Abu Musa, AND IT IS A SEVERE CONTRADICTION. Moreover, there is A FURTHER CONTRADICTION in the report of Masruq. It is recorded by Ibn Hibban in the report of 'Asim, from Shaqiq from him (i.e. Masruq) with the wording, "Abu Bakr was following his salat (i.e. that of the Prophet), and the people (were following the salat of Abu Bakr."(١

So, what answer do the Sunni 'ulama have to these contradictions? They, of course, attempted to devise a way out, as 'Allamah al-Albani explains, after quoting the :contradictory stories

ففى هذه الروايه أن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم كان إماما بخلاف الأولى؛ ففيها أنه كان مقتديا، وقد اختلف

Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: - ١ Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ٢, p. ١٣٠

العلماء فى التوفيق بين الروايات على وجوه ذكرها الحافظ فى " الفتح" ؛ أولاها أن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم صلى صلاتين فى المسجد؛ كان فى إحداهما مأموما، وفى الأخرى إماما. وإليه ذهب ابن حزم فى "المحلى" (٣/٤٧)، والبيهقى ، وقبله ابن حبان

In this report, it is stated that the Prophet, peace be upon him, was the Imam (in the salat), in contradiction to the first one which states that he was a follower (in the salat). The ‘ulama are in disagreement over the methods to harmonize the two reports. Al-Hafiz mentioned them (i.e. those methods) in al-Fath. The first of them is that the Prophet, peace be upon him, performed two salats in the mosque. In one of them, he was a follower (of Abu Bakr), and in the other, he was the Imam (of Abu Bakr). This was the opinion of Ibn Hazm in al-Muhalla (٣/٤٧) and al-Bayhaqi, and before him, Ibn Hibban.(١)

The ‘Allamah does not cite any other of those methods. This suggests that he most probably considers the two-salat “solution” as the strongest possibility. But, does it really help the Sunni case? Apparently, it does not. Even if we ignore Anas’ claim that the Messenger of Allah never participated in congregational salat in his mosque since the last Thursday of his fatal illness, it is still impossible to fix his alleged salat behind Abu Bakr anywhere within his lifetime! No matter where it stays, it clashes with some other “sahih” ahadith of the Ahl al-Sunnah and

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١ - Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani, Asl Sifat Salat al-Nabi (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Ma’arif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’; ١st edition, ١۴٢٧ H), vol. ١, p. ٨۴

creates a new commotion. Besides, even finding a comfortable seat for that riwayah (about Abu Bakr's leadership of the Prophet) does not in any way resolve the innumerable, severe contradictions in the various reports about the Messenger of Allah's last congregational prayers and his alleged order(s) to Abu Bakr to lead in .salat

?Was Abu Bakr Even Qualified To Lead .۵

Apart from the severe contradictions in the ahadith on Abu Bakr's alleged leadership of salat during the Prophet's fatal illness, there is also the question of its factual possibility. It is one thing for something to be possible; it is another for it to have truly occurred. Where it is impossible, then all reports of its occurrence are false by default. However, where it is possible, then additional, consistent and authentic evidence of its actual occurrence must be produced by whoever seeks to rely on that fact. With regards to Abu Bakr's alleged leadership of the salat, there are only conflicting, irreconcilable "proofs" of it. As such, there actually are none. In this chapter, we seek .to explore the possibility of it even ever happening. This way, we bury it for good

Without a doubt, the very first step in determining the possibility of Abu Bakr's leadership of the salat is to establish or discredit his qualification for it. Unless it is proved that he was qualified to lead, then every effort to claim that he did is futile. If he was not qualified, apparently his appointment as prayer leader by the Prophet, ,sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi

would have been impossible. However, if he was qualified, it would, in that case, be at least possible. Then, additional, unquestionable evidence would become admissible to .establish its factual occurrence

So, was Abu Bakr qualified to lead the Messenger of Allah in salat? Moreover, was he ?equally qualified to lead the Sahabah in salat in the Prophet’s mosque

:The answer to the first question is in this verse

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تقدموا بين يدى الله ورسوله واتقوا الله إن الله سميع عليم

O you who believe! Do not lead in front of Allah and His Messenger, and fear Allah. (Verily, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.(١)

This effectively makes it absolutely haram to lead the Prophet of Allah in anything – :including in battles and salat. Imam al-Mubarakfuri (d. ١٢٨٢ H) also states

حكى ذلك القاضى عياض قال ولا يصح لأحد أن يؤم جالسا بعده صلى الله عليه وسلم قال وهو مشهور قول مالك وجماعه أصحابه قال وهذا أولى الأقاويل لأنه صلى الله عليه وسلم لا يصح التقدم بين يديه فى الصلاه ولا فى غيرها ولا لعذر ولا لغيره

That is narrated from Qaḍi ‘Iyaḍ. He said, “It is not correct for anyone to lead in salat in a sitting posture other than him, peace be upon him.” He said, “And this is the famous statement of Malik and the majority of his companions.” He said, “And this is the most correct of the opinions, because it is NOT correct to lead in front of him in salat or in anything else, whether due to an excuse

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Qur’an ٤٩:١ -١

(or otherwise."(1)

:Al-Hafiz (d. 852 H), while relating the submissions of Qaḍi Iyaḍ, reports

واحتج أيضا بأنه صلى الله عليه وسلم إنما صلى بهم قاعدا لأنه لا يصح التقدم بين يديه لنهى الله عن ذلك

He cited as proof also the fact that he, peace be upon him, led them in salat in a sitting posture, because it is NOT correct to lead in front of him, due to the prohibition of that (by Allah.(2)

In simpler words, it was absolutely impossible that Abu Bakr ever led Muhammad in salat or in any anything else. Allah has totally forbidden that; and so, Abu Bakr was NOT qualified in any way or by any means to lead the Messenger in salat or in any other situation or circumstance. Even Abu Bakr too realized this, as documented by :(Imam Muslim (d. 261 H

قال أبو بكر ما كان لابن أبى قحافه أن يصلى بين يدى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم

Abu Bakr said, "It is NOT for the son of Abu Quhafah (i.e. Abu Bakr) to lead salat in (front of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him."(3)

So, all the reports about how the Prophet was led in salat by Abu Bakr or anyone else from this Ummah are fallacious and hold no truth at all. The Book of Allah rejects them, and Abu Bakr too denounced them. There is also an element of high blasphemy in those ahadith. The only way Abu Bakr could have legitimately led the Messenger of Allah in salat was

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1- Abu al-'Ala Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd al-Rahim al-Mubarakfuri, Tuhfat al-Ahwazi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; 1st edition, 1410 H), vol. 2, p. 294

2- Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; 2nd edition), vol. 2, p. 146

3- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut:

Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ١, p. ٣١۶,

(۴٢١ (١٠٢

if the latter had lost or forfeited his risalah (messengership) and had become inferior .to the former in many areas

Moreover, we ask our Sunni brothers: who was the ruler of Madinah at that moment when – as your sect claims - Abu Bakr led the Prophet in salat? Was it the Messenger? Or, was it Abu Bakr? This question is crucial in the light of some authentic narrations in :your books. For instance, Imam al-Tirmidhi (d. ٢٧٩ H) records

حدثنا هناد حدثنا أبومعاويه عن الأعمش عن إسماعيل بن رجاء عن أوس بن ضمعج عن أبى مسعود أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال لا يؤم الرجل فى سلطانه ولا يجلس على تكرمته إلا بإذنه

:Hanad – Abu Mu'awiyah – al-A'mash – Isma'il b. Raja - Aws b. Ḍam'aj – Abu Mas'ud

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "No one can lead a man in salat in his place of authority, and no one can sit in his place of honour except with his (permission."(١

:Al-Tirmidhi says

هذا حديث حسن صحيح

(This hadith is hasan sahih(٢

:Allamah al-Albani (d. ١٤٢٠ H) also comments'

صحيح

(Sahih(٣

:Imam al-Nasai (d. ٣٠٣ H) also documents

أخبرنا إبراهيم بن محمد التيمى قال حدثنا يحيى بن سعيد عن شعبه عن إسماعيل بن رجاء عن أوس بن ضمعج عن أبى مسعود قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم لا يؤم الرجل فى سلطانه ولا يجلس على تكرمته إلا بإذنه

Ibrahim b. Muhammad al-Taymi – Yahya b. Sa'id – Shu'bah – Isma'il b. Raja – Aws b. :Ḍam'aj – Abu Mas'ud

The Messenger of

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۱ - - Abu ‘Isa Muhammad b. ‘Isa al-Sulami al-Tirmidhi, al-Jami’ al-Sahih Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۵, p. ۹۹, ۲۷۷۲

۲- Ibid

۳- Ibid

Allah, peace be upon him, said: “No one can lead a man in salat in his place of authority, and no one can sit in his place of honour except with his permission.”(1)

And ‘Allamah al-Albani declares again:

صحيح

Sahih(2)

So, if the Prophet of Allah was really still the amir of the Muslims at that moment, then Abu Bakr was further disqualified from ever leading him in salat! Whoever insists that Abu Bakr was his Imam is telling us that he (the Messenger) had lost authority over Madinah. Meanwhile, the authority of the Prophet was, and still is, tied to his risalah, among others. As such, if he had lost authority over Madinah, then he must have lost all his divine ranks. The direct implication of this is – the only way Abu Bakr could have been the Prophet’s Imam was if the latter was no longer a messenger of Allah, at the least! Therefore, whoever claims that Abu Bakr led him in salat has thereby rejected his (i.e. the Prophet’s) risalah! There is simply no second way to it.

In other ahadith, the Messenger of Allah mentions some other conditions with farther reaching implications. Imam Muslim records:

وحدثنا أبو بكر بن أبى شيبه وأبو سعيد الأشج كلاهما عن أبى خالد قال أبو بكر حدثنا أبو خالد الأحمر عن الأعمش عن إسماعيل بن رجاء عن أوس بن ضمعج عن أبى مسعود الأنصارى قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يؤم القوم أقرؤهم لكتاب الله فإن كانوا فى القراءه سواء فأعلمهم بالسنه فإن

1- Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman Ahmad b. Shu’ayb al-Nasai, al-Mujtaba min al-Sunan (Halab: Maktab al-Matbu’at al-Islamiyyah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۰۶ H) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, p. ۷۷, ۷۸۳

2- Ibid

كانوا فى السنه سواء فأقدمهم هجره فإن كانوا فى الهجره سواء فأقدمهم سلما ولا يؤمن الرجل الرجل فى سلطانه ولا يقعد فى بيته على تكرمته إلا بإذنه

Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah and Abu Sa'id al-Ashja' – Abu Khalid: Abu Bakr – Abu Khalid al-Ahmar – al-A'mash – Isma'il b. Raja – Aws b. Ḍam'aj – Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "The people should be led in salat by the best reciter of the Book of Allah among them. But, if they are equal in recitation, then the one who is the most knowledgeable among them concerning the Sunnah. If they are equal regarding the Sunnah, then the earliest of them to do the hijrah. If they are equal in the hijrah, then the earliest of them to embrace Islam. No man can lead another in salat in a place where the latter has authority, or sit in his place of honour in his house without his permission."(١)

There is need to quickly highlight a point here. Where someone is the ruler or administrator of a place, as long as he is a Muslim, none can lead him in salat in it. He is the automatic Imam, even if he is not the best of them in Qur'anic recitation, or in knowledge of the Sunnah. His political authority overrides all the other set conditions. However, where none in the mosque is the ruler of its area, then the various criteria are examined in the specified order.

١- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ١, p. ٤٦٥, (٢٩٠ ٦٧٣)

:Imam al-Mubarakfuri (d. ١٢٨٢ H) confirms

وفى روايه مسلم لا- يؤمن الرجل الرجل فى سلطانه ... ولذا كان ابن عمر يصلى خلف الحجاج وصح عن ابن عمر أن إمام المسجد مقدم على غير السلطان

In the report of (Imam) Muslim, it is stated "No man can lead another in salat in a place where the latter has authority."... This was why Ibn 'Umar used to offer salat behind al-Hajjaj. It is also authentically narrated that Ibn 'Umar stated that the Imam (of the mosque leads (only) the non-ruler.(١)

These facts reveal that leadership in salat is no indicator of superiority before Allah at all. Ibn 'Umar was superior – in the eyes of Sunni Islam – over al-Hajjaj in all ways and by all means. So, even a drunken Sunni governor can validly be the Imam for a saint of Allah. The other criteria in the hadith are of the same effect as well. The best reciter in the Ummah, who is the most qualified to lead the salat after the ruler or governor, may – just like the executive leader - not necessarily be the best of the Muslims, or their most knowledgeable. Something we wonder about though is – how many of the Sunni kings, sultans, emirs, presidents and sheikhs today lead salat in their grand ?mosques

:Imam Ahmad (d. ٢٤١ H) also documents

حدثنا عبد الله حدثنى أبى ثنا محمد بن جعفر ثنا شعبه عن إسماعيل بن رجاء قال سمعت أوس بن ضمعج يقول سمعت أبا مسعود يقول قال لنا رسول الله

١- Abu al-'Ala Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Abd al-Rahim al-Mubarakfuri, Tuhfat al-Ahwazi bi Sharh Jami' al-Tirmidhi (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; ١st edition, ١٤١٠ H), vol. ٢, p. ٢٩

صلى الله عليه و سلم يؤم القوم أقرؤهم لكتاب الله تعالى وإقدمهم قراءه فان كانت قراءتهم سواء فليؤمهم أقدمهم هجره فان كانوا فى الهجره سواء فليؤمهم أكبرهم سنا ولا- يؤمن الرجل فى أهله ولا فى سلطانه ولا يجلس على تكرمته فى بيته الا ان يأذن له أو بإذنه

Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father – Muhammad b. Ja'far – Shu'bah – Isma'il b. Raja –' :Aws b. Ḍam'aj – Abu Mas'ud

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said to us: "The people should be led in salat by the best reciter of the Book of Allah the Most High among them. But, if their recitations are equal, then the earliest of them in hijrah should lead them in salat. If they are equal in the hijrah, then the oldest of them should lead them in salat. No man can be led in salat among his family members or in a place where he has authority, or (none can sit in his place of honour in his house without his permission."(١)

:Shaykh al-Arnaut comments

إسناده صحيح على شرط مسلم

(Its chain is sahih upon the standard of (Imam) Muslim(٢)

It is undisputed that Abu Bakr was not the ruler over the Messenger of Allah at any point in time. Therefore, he was automatically and absolutely disqualified from ever leading his Prophet in salat. Besides, was Abu Bakr a better reciter of the Qur'an than the Messenger of Allah? Was he more knowledgeable of the Sunnah than the Prophet? Did Abu Bakr do the hijrah

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Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) -١ [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ۴, p. ١٢١, ١٧١٣٣

Ibid -٢

before him? Was he older than his Messenger? Did he accept Islam before his Prophet? We ask – on what basis exactly was Abu Bakr ever qualified lead the Master and Best of all creation in salat? Apparently, there is none, and there can never be any! As such, all the Sunni riwayat about how he supposedly was the Imam of the Messenger are only Sunni exaggerations and hallucinations!

Interestingly, Abu Bakr was equally unqualified to lead even the other Sahabah! In order to be qualified, he had to be their best reciter. But, was he? Imam al-Bukhari (d. ۲۵۶ H) records the answer of 'Umar:

حدثنا عمرو بن على حدثنا يحيى حدثنا سفيان عن حبيب عن سعيد بن جبير عن ابن عباس قال قال عمر رضى الله عنه: أقرؤنا أبى وأقضانا على

'Amr b. 'Ali – Yahya – Sufyan – Habib – Sa'id b. Jubayr – Ibn 'Abbas:

'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The best reciter among us is Ubayy, and the best judge among us is 'Ali."(۱)

'Allamah al-Albani has equally copied the Prophetic confirmation of this:

عن أنس بن مالك، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال :أرحم أمتى بأمتى أبو بكر وأشدهم فى دين الله عمر وأصدقهم حياء عثمان وأقضاهم على بن أبى طالب. وأقرؤهم لكتاب الله أبى بن كعب.

Narrated Anas b. Malik:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, "The most merciful of my Ummah to my Ummah is Abu Bakr. The most severe of them in the religion of Allah is 'Umar. The most shy

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۱- Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; ۳rd edition, ۱۴۰۷ H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. ۴, p. ۱۶۲۸, ۴۲۱۱

of them is ‘Uthman. And the best judge among them is ‘Ali b. Abi Talib. And the best (reciter of the Book of Allah among them is Ubayy b. Ka’b.”(١)

صحيح

(Sahih.(٢)

So, it was not Abu Bakr?! Therefore, it was Ubayy who was qualified for the leadership of the salat and NOT Abu Bakr! With the presence of Ubayy among the Sahabah, Abu Bakr – the first Sunni khalifah – was thereby disqualified from leading either the Prophet or his followers in salat in the grand mosque of Madinah. With this, all the reports about Abu Bakr’s leadership of the salat drown in the Sunni ocean of fabrications. The Messenger of Allah would never place the wrong rod in the right hole – neither by nepotism nor by mistake. The Sunnah is that the best reciter should lead in salat – unless where the ruler is present. Abu Bakr was neither the best reciter nor .the ruler. Those facts alone terminate the entire story

Imamah of Bastards and Children .۶

The most qualified to lead salat in any circumstance is the Muslim administrator within his domain, according to Sunni Islam. He may be righteous or a drunkard. He may be a good reciter or a poor one. He may be knowledgeable or ignorant. He is the automatic Imam. Where he is absent in the mosque, then the most qualified is the best reciter among those present. This best reciter too may also be the best of them in the Sight of Allah – in terms of taqwa

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Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani, Sahih Sunan Ibn Majah (Maktabah al-Ma’arif li -١ al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’; ١st edition, ١۴١٧ H), vol. ١, pp. ۶٧-۶٨, ١٢۵

Ibid -٢

piety) and knowledge – or one of their worst. Leadership in salat has nothing to do) with righteousness or spiritual superiority. A lot of Sunni ahadith testify to this. We have discussed some of them in the last chapter. Let us briefly quote a few more :before proceeding. Imam Ahmad (d. ۲۴۱ H) records

حدثنا عبد الله حدثنی أبی ثنا یحیی بن سعید ثنا هشام قال ثنا قتاده عن یونس بن جبیر عن حطان بن عبد الله الرقاشی ان الأشعری صلی بأصحابه صلاه... فقال الأشعری ...ان نبی الله صلی الله علیه و سلم خطبنا فعلمنا سنتنا وبین لنا صلاتنا فقال أقیموا صفوفکم ثم لیؤمکم أقرؤکم

Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Yahya b. Sa'id – Hisham –' :Qatadah – Yunus b. Jubayr – Hittan b. 'Abd Allah al-Raqashi

Al-Ash'ari led his companions in a salat ... So, al-'Ashari said, "... Verily, the Prophet of Allah, peace be upon him, gave us a sermon and taught us our Sunnah, and explained to us our salat. So, he said, 'Establish your congregational rows. Then, the best reciter (among you should be your Imam.'"(۱)

:Shaykh al-Arnaut says

إسناده صحیح علی شرط مسلم

(Its chain is sahih upon the standard of (Imam) Muslim.(۲)

:Imam Muslim (d. ۲۶۱ H) also documents

حدثنا قتیبه بن سعید حدثنا أبو عوانه عن قتاده عن أبی نضره عن أبی سعید الخدری قال قال رسول الله صلی الله علیه و سلم إذا کانوا ثلاثه فلیؤمهم أحدهم وأحقهم بالإمامه أقرؤهم

:Qutaybah b. Sa'id – Abu 'Awanah – Qatadah – Abu Naḍrah – Abu Sa'id al-Khudri

The

Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) -۱ [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ۴, p. ۴۰۹, ۱۹۶۸۰

٢- Ibid

Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: “Whenever there are three persons, one of them should be their Imam. The most entitled to be the Imam among them is the best reciter among them.(١)

Imam Ahmad again records:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثنى أبى ثنا عبد الرزاق أنا ابن جريج قال لى عبد الملك ان أنس بن مالك قال عن النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم قال يؤم القوم أقرؤهم للقرآن

Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – ‘Abd al-Razzaq – Ibn Jurayj – ‘Abd al-Malik – Anas b. Malik:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “The people are to be led in salat by the best reciter of the Qur’an among them.”(٢)

Al-Arnaut submits:

صحيح لغيره

It is sahih li ghayrihi(٣)

The Sahabah too put this into practice. Imam al-Bukhari (d. ٢٥۶ H) documents such an instance:

حدثنا إبراهيم بن المنذر قال حدثنا أنس بن عياض عن عبيد الله عن نافع عن ابن عمر قال : لما قدم المهاجرون الأولون العصبه موضع بقباء قبل مقدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم كان يؤمهم سالم مولى أبى حذيفه وكان أكثرهم قرآنا

Ibrahim b. al-Mundhir – Anas b. ‘Iyaḍ – ‘Ubayd Allah – Nafi’ – Ibn ‘Umar:

When the earliest Muhajirun came to al-‘Usbah, a place in Quba, before the arrival of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, used to lead them in salat, and he was the most knowledgeable of the Qur’an among them.(۴)

Al-Hafiz (d. ٨٥٢ H) comments about this hadith:

قوله) وكان أكثر هم قرآنا (إشاره

۱- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ۱, p. ۴۶۴, (۲۸۹ (۶۷۲

۲- Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ۳, p. ۱۶۳, ۱۲۶۸۷

۳- Ibid

۴- Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; ۳rd edition, ۱۴۰۷ H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. ۱, p. ۲۴۶, ۶۶۰

إلى سبب تقديمهم له مع كونهم أشرف منه وفى روايه للطبرانى لأنه كان أكثرهم قرآنا

His statement (and he was the most knowledgeable of the Qur'an among them) is an indicator towards their reason for making him their leader (in salat) despite that they were of more noble statuses than him. In the report of al-Tabarani, it is narrated: "because he was the most knowledgeable of them of the Qur'an)(١)

The explanation is confirmed by this riwayah of Imam Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. ٢٣٥ H):

حدثنا ابن نمير عن عبيد الله عن نافع عن ابن عمر أن المهاجرين حين أقبلوا من مكه نزلوا إلى جنب قباء فأمهم سالم مولى أبى حذيفه لأنه كان أكثرهم قرآنا فيهم أبو سلمه بن عبد الأسد وعمر بن الخطاب.

Ibn Numayr – 'Ubayd Allah – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar:

When the Muhajirun fled Makkah, they camped near Quba and Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, led them in salat because he was the most knowledgeable of the Qur'an among them. Among them were Abu Salamah b. 'Abd al-Asad and 'Umar b. al-Khattab.(٢)

Grading another hadith with this same exact chain, 'Allamah al-Albani (d. ١٤٢٠ H) declares:

وهذا إسناد صحيح على شرط الشيخين

This chain is sahih upon the standard of the two Shaykhs.(٣)

Al-Bukhari further records:

حدثنا عثمان بن صالح حدثنا عبد الله بن وهب أخبرنى ابن جريج أن نافعا أخبره أن ابن عمر رضى الله عنهما أخبره قال كان سالم مولى أبى حذيفه يؤم المهاجرين الأولين وأصحاب النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم فى مسجد قباء فيهم أبو بكر وعمر وأبو سلمه وزيد

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١ - Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ٢, p. ١٥۶

۲- Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Abi Shaybah Ibrahim b. ‘Uthman b. Abi Bakr b. Abi‘ Shaybah al-Kufi al-‘Ubsi, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah fi al-Ahadith wa al-Athar (Dar al-Fikr; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۹ H) [annotator: Prof. Sa’id al-Laham], vol. ۱, p. ۳۷۹, ۱۱

۳- Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh b. Tajati b. Adam al-Ashqudri al-Albani, Sahih Abi Dawud (Kuwait: Muasassat al-Gharas li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’; ۱st edition, ۱۴۲۳ H), vol. ۳, p. ۲۷۰, ۶۸۸

وعامر بن ربيعه

Uthman b. Salih – ‘Abd Allah b. Wahb – Ibn Jurayj – Nafi’ – Ibn ‘Umar, may Allah be‘ :pleased with him

Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, used to lead the earliest Muhajirun and the Sahabah of the Prophet, peace be upon him, in Salat in the mosque of Quba. Among (them were Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, Abu Salamah, and Amir b. Rabi’ah.(١

So, the most senior Muhajirun – including Abu Bakr and ‘Umar – unanimously appointed Salim, a freed slave, as their Imam in salat pending the arrival of the Messenger of Allah, sallallahu ‘alaihi wa alihi, because he was more knowledgeable of the Qur’an than all of them. This, obviously, was in line with the Sunnah of .Muhammad

Salim was a freed slave. But, the ‘ulama of the Ahl al-Sunnah actually allow leadership in salat by even serving slaves and bastards too, as long as they are the best in :Qur’anic recitation, as al-Hafiz declares

وإلى صحه إمامه العبد ذهب الجمهور وخالف مالک ... وإلى صحه إمامه ولد الزنا ذهب الجمهور

The majority (of the scholars) accepted the correctness of leadership in salat by a slave. But, (Imam) Malik objected…. Also, the majority accepted the correctness of (leadership in salat by a bastard.(٢

The supreme Salafi fiqh council in Saudi Arabia and across the world, al-Lajnah al-:Daimah, also states

تصح إمامه العبد وولد الزنا فی الصلاه، إذا كان كل منهما أهلا لذلک، من جهه الدين؛ لعموم قوله :يؤم القوم أقرؤهم لكتاب الله " ولا نعلم دليلا يمنع ذلک.

The leadership of the slave

Abu ‘Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma’il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju’fi, al- -١

Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; ٣rd edition, ١٤٠٧ H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. ٦, p. ٢٦٢٥, ٦٧٥٤

٢ - Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ٢, p. ١٥٥

or the bastard in salat is correct, as long as each of them is qualified for it, from the religious aspect, due to the generality of his (i.e. the Prophet's) statement, "The people are to be led in salat by the best reciter of the Book of Allah among them." We do not know any proof forbidding that.(1)

Even a small child can lead his grandfathers in salat, according to the same council:

تصح إمامه الصبی الذی یعقل الصلاه؛ لقول النبی) ص" (یؤم القوم أقرؤهم لکتاب الله "

The leadership of salat by a small child, who understands salat, is correct, due to the statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "The people are to be led in salat by the best reciter of the Book of Allah among them."(2)

As such, if the Messenger of Allah ever truly designated Abu Bakr as Imam in salat during the former's fatal illness – and he never did – then it would have been only because he considered him as having the best recitation among the Sahabah – nothing more, nothing less. Most importantly, even if Abu Bakr had been a bastard – and he was NOT – he would still have been appointed Imam in salat over the Sahabah by the Prophet at that point in time, according to Sunni Islam, as long as he had the best Qur'anic recitation among them. The problem however is that Abu Bakr was never the overall best reciter among his colleagues.

So, he was unqualified, and therefore

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۱ - Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah li al-Buhuth al-'Ilmiyyah wa al-Ifta, compiled and arranged by Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Razzaq, al-Duwaysh, vol. ۷, pp. ۴۱۴-۴۱۵

۲- Ibid, vol. ۷, p. ۴۱۵

could never have been appointed as Imam during the period of the illness. Still, even if he had been qualified and had been designated, it would have indicated absolutely .nothing of spiritual status or choice for the khilafah after the Messenger

However, the ‘ulama of the Ahl al-Sunnah go to desperate lengths in exaggerating about the event – which, in the first place, is narrated only in severely contradictory reports. For instance, Imam al-Nawawi (d. ۶۷۶ H) claims about the alleged leadership :of the Sahabah in salat by Abu Bakr

فيه فوائد منها فضيله أبى بكر الصديق رضى الله عنه وترجيحه على جميع الصحابه رضوان الله عليهم أجمعين وتفضيله وتنبيه على أنه أحق بخلافه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من غيره ومنها أن الإمام إذا عرض له عذر عن حضور الجماعه استخلف من يصلى بهم وأنه لا يستخلف إلا أفضلهم

There are benefits from it. Among them is the excellence of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, and his preference over all the Sahabah, riḍwanullah ‘alaihim ajma’in, and his overall superiority and his notice that he (Abu Bakr) was more entitled to the khilafah of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, than anyone else. Among them (i.e. the benefits) is that the Imam, if he has an excuse for not attending the congregational prayer, he should deputize someone to lead them in (salat, and that he cannot deputize except the best of them.(۱

For Allah’s sake, where exactly did he get all that? We are certain that this

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۱- Abu Zakariyah Yahya b. Sharaf al-Nawawi, Sharh Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-‘Arabi; ۱۴۰۷ H), vol. ۴, p. ۱۳۷

same Nawawi and his followers would object to these words about Salim – the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, concerning his leadership over Abu Bakr, 'Umar and the :other Sahabah in salat

There are benefits from it. Among them is the excellence of Salim, may Allah be pleased with him, and his preference over all the Sahabah, riḍwanullah 'alaihim ajma'in, and his overall superiority and a notice that he (Salim) was more entitled to .the khilafah of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, than anyone else

It is amusing how almost everything about Abu Bakr – whether true or not – is easily interpreted by the Ahl al-Sunnah as "evidence" of his "excellence", "superiority" and "khilafah". Sometimes, the ridiculousness of such submissions gets to extreme lengths, as in this case of his alleged leadership in salat. For instance, they claim that Abu Bakr's leadership in salat over the Sahabah was evidence of his overall superiority above them. Of course, such a conclusion actually contradicts the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. Nonetheless, did Abu Bakr not lead the Prophet in salat according to Sunnis? So, did the Messenger consider himself to have lost his overall superiority over Abu Bakr? Moreover, Abu Bakr allegedly offered the leadership of the salat to 'Umar. Was he then admitting thereby the superiority of ?'Umar over himself

Abu Bakr's Presence in the Army of Usamah .۷

There is another fundamental twist to the whole saga about Abu Bakr's alleged ,leadership of the salat during the Prophet's fatal illness, sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi

which creates a new major crisis for the official Sunni narrative. Imam al-Bukhari (d. 256 H) records:

حدثنا خالد بن مخلد حدثنا سليمان قال حدثني عبد الله بن دينار عن عبد الله بن عمر رضى الله عنهما قال : بعث النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم بعثا وأمر عليهم أسامه بن زيد فطعن بعض الناس فى إمارته فقال النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم إن تطعنوا فى إمارته فقد كنتم تطعنون فى إماره أبيه من قبل وايم الله إن كان لخليقا للإماره وإن وكان لمن أحب الناس إلى وإن هذا لمن أحب الناس إلى بعده

Khalid b. Makhlad – Sulayman – 'Abd Allah b. Dinar – 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, sent troops and appointed Usamah b. Zayd as their amir (commander). But, some people criticized his appointment as amir. Then, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "If you criticize his appointment as amir, you used to criticize the appointment of his father as amir before. I swear by Allah, he (Usamah's father) deserved the appointment as amir indeed, and he used to be one of the most beloved persons to me, and now this (Usamah) is certainly one of the most beloved persons to me after him."(1)

Dr. al-Bagha has some comments on this narration:

(فطعن) (قدح وتكلم فيها). (بعض الناس) (وكان أشدهم فى هذا عياش ابن أبى ربيعه المخزومى رضى الله عنه .

(criticized) disparaged and condemned. (Some people) (the most severe of them in this was 'Ayyash b. Abi Rabi'ah al-Makhzumi,

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1- - Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al-Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; 3rd edition, 1407 H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. 3, p. 1365, 3524

(may Allah be pleased with him.(١

:Al-Hafiz (d. ٨٥٢ H) also has these words on the hadith

قوله) باب بعث النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم أسامه بن زید فی مرضه الذی توفی فیه(إنما أخر المصنف هذه الترجمه لما جاء أنه کان تجهیز أسامه یوم السبت قبل موت النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم بیومین

His statement (Chapter on the Appointment of Usamah b. Zayd by the Prophet, peace be upon him, during his Fatal Illness): The author (i.e. al-Bukhari) has only given this biography a late timing due to what is narrated that the mobilization of Usamah (for (war) was on Saturday, two days before the death of the Prophet.(٢

This was well into the period when Abu Bakr was supposed to be leading the salat! :What is going on here? Well, al-Hafiz has some more information

وکان ممن انتدب مع أسامه کبار المهاجرین والأنصار منهم أبو بکر وعمر وأبو عبیده وسعد وسعید وقتاده بن النعمان وسلمه بن أسلم فتکلم فی ذلک قوم منهم عیاش بن أبی ربیعه المخزومی فرد علیه عمر

Among those conscripted with Usamah were senior Muhajirun and Ansar, among them Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Abu 'Ubaydah, Sa'd, Sa'id, Qatadah b. al-Nu'man, and Salamah b. Aslam. So, a group criticized that, among them 'Ayyash b. Abi Rabi'ah al-(Makhzumi, and 'Umar opposed him.(٣

So, the Messenger of Allah deployed Abu Bakr and 'Umar as ordinary foot soldiers .under the command of Usamah, just two days before his death. This is huge indeed

:Elsewhere, al-Hafiz submits further

قال بن سعد ولد أسامه فی الاسلام ومات النبی صلی الله علیه

١- Ibid

٢- Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ٨, p. ١١٥

٣- Ibid

وسلم وله عشرون سنه وقال بن أبى خيثمه ثمانى عشره وكان أمره على جيش عظيم

Ibn Sa'd said: "Usamah was born during the Islamic era, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, died while he (Usamah) was twenty years old." Ibn Abi Khaythamah said, "He was eighteen years old". He (the Prophet) made him the amir (commander) of a (huge army.(١)

Usamah was old enough only to be a grandson of Abu Bakr. He was barely a teenager. Yet, the Messenger of Allah, in his divinely-inspired wisdom, made him the amir over Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Besides that, Usamah was amir just a few days before the Prophet's death, during the most serious phase of his fatal illness when he was no :longer able to appear in the mosque. The direct implications of this are clear

Abu Bakr and 'Umar were under the command of Usamah. Therefore, they both .١ were supposed to be at the army camp, and Usamah was their appointed Imam in .salat as long as their deployment lasted

The Messenger never intended either Abu Bakr or 'Umar to be his khalifah. .٢ Otherwise, he would not have sent them away from Madinah during what obviously .were his very last days on the earth

The story of Abu Bakr's leadership of salat in the Prophet's mosque is false. If Abu .٣ Bakr was in Madinah, it was only because he had mutinied from the Islamic army. .Mutineers are never rewarded with any form of leadership in Islam

Understandably, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. ٧٢٨

Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahabah (Beirut: Dar al- -١ Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; ١st edition, ١۴١۵ H) [annotators: Shaykh 'Adil Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Mawjud and Shaykh 'Ali Muhammad Ma'uḍ], vol. ١, p. ٢٠٢, ٨٩

:H) was very disturbed

قـال الرافضـی التـاسع أن رسول الله صـلی الله علیه و سـلم قـال جهزوا جیش أسـامه وکرر الأمر بتنفیـذه وکان فیهم أبو بکر وعمر وعثمان ولم ینفذ أمیر المؤمنین لأنه أراد منعهم من التوثب علی الخلافه بعده فلم یقبلوا منه

والجواب من وجوه أحـدها المطالبه بصـحه النقل فإن هـذ لا یروی بإسـناد معروف ولا صـححه أحـد من علماء النقل ومعلوم أن الاحتجاج بالمنقولات لا یسوغ إلا بعد قیام الحجه بثبوتها وإلا فیمکن أن یقول کل أحد ما شاء

الثانی أن هـذا کذب بإجماع علماء النقل فلم یکن فی جیش أسامه لا أبو بکر ولا عثمان وإنما قد قیل إنه کان فیه عمر وقد تواتر عن النبی صـلی الله علیه و سـلم أنه اسـتخلف أبا بکر علی الصـلاه حتی مات وصـلی أبو بکر رضـی الله عنه الصبح یوم موته وقد کشف سجف الحجره فرآهم صفوفا خلف أبی بکر فسر بذلک فکیف یکون مع هذا قد أمره أن یخرج فی جیش أسامه

The Rafiḍi said: “The ninth (point) is that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: “Mobilize the army of Usamah” and repeatedly gave the order for its dispatch. And among them (i.e. the soldiers under Usamah) were Abu Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthman. But, he did not conscript Amir al-Muminin, because he (the Prophet) intended to prevent them (i.e. those in the army) from jumping over the khilafah after him. But, .”they did not accept it from him

The answer is from a number of angles. One of them is request for evidence of the authenticity of the report. This is

because this (claim) is not narrated with any known chain, and none of the scholars of narrations ever declared it authentic. It is, of course, known that the use of reports as evidence is not permissible except after providing proof of their authenticity. .Otherwise, everyone would say whatever he likes

The second (answer) is that this (report) is a lie by the consensus of the scholars of narrations. Therefore, neither Abu Bakr nor 'Uthman was in the army of Usamah. It is only said that 'Umar was in it. Meanwhile, it has been narrated in mutawatir reports from the Prophet, peace be upon him, that he deputized Abu Bakr to lead the salat until he (the Prophet) died. Moreover, Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, performed the Subh (early morning) prayer of the day of his (i.e. the Prophet's) death. He (the Prophet) had drawn the curtain of the room, and saw them in congregational rows behind Abu Bakr, and he was pleased with that. So, with this, how could he (i.e. (the Prophet) have ordered him (i.e. Abu Bakr) to go out with the army of Usamah?(١)

Here, our Shaykh has muddled things up. First and foremost, according to the "sahih" hadith of 'Aishah, the Messenger – during his lifetime - literally took over the salat from Abu Bakr, thereby effectively terminating the latter's alleged appointment (assuming it ever existed). It was the Zuhr prayer of that Monday, and that was the .last recorded salat of the Prophet

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١ - Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Qurtubah; ١st edition, ١۴٠۶ H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad Rashad Salim], vol. ٨, pp. ٢٩٢-٢٩٣

As such, Abu Bakr’s prayer leadership – even if it had been true – was cut off before .the Messenger’s death

Besides, Ibn Taymiyyah submitted that the reports about Abu Bakr’s conscription into Usamah’s army had no known chains. How true was this claim? Our Shaykh further stated that all the Sunni scholars of narrations, without a single exception, from the time of the Prophet up to his own lifetime, had explicitly declared those same narrations as “a lie”. So, we should be able to easily harvest from hundreds, or .perhaps thousands, of ancient Sunni books tons of statements to that effect

The truth, however, is the opposite. Malik b. Anas (d. ۱۷۹ H), Ibn al-Mubarak (d. ۱۸۱ H), al-Shafi’i (d. ۲۰۴ H), al-Tayalisi (d. ۲۰۴ H), ‘Abd al-Razzaq al-San’ani (d. ۲۱۱ H), al-Humaydi (d. ۲۱۹ H), Ibn Ja’d (d. ۲۳۰ H), Ibn Sa’d (d. ۲۳۰ H), Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. ۲۳۵ H), Ibn Rahwayh (d. ۲۳۸ H), Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. ۲۴۱ H), al-Darimi (d. ۲۵۵ H), al-Bukhari (d. ۲۵۶ H), Muslim (d. ۲۶۱ H), Ibn Majah (d. ۲۷۳ H), Abu Dawud (d. ۲۷۵ H), Ibn Qutaybah (d. ۲۷۶ H), al-Tirmidhi (d. ۲۷۹ H), Ibn Abi ‘Asim (d. ۲۸۷ H), al-Bazzar (d. ۲۹۲ H), al-Nasai (d. ۳۰۳ H), Ibn Khuzaymah (d. ۳۱۱ H), al-‘Aqili (d. ۳۲۲ H), Ibn Abi Hatim (d. ۳۲۷ H), Ibn Hibban (d. ۳۵۴ H), al-Tabarani (d. ۳۶۰ H), al-Daraqutni (d. ۳۸۵ H), Ibn Shahin (d. ۳۸۵ H), al-Hakim (d. ۴۰۳ H), al-Bayhaqi (d. ۴۵۸ H), al-Baghdadi

d. ۴۶۳ H), Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. ۴۶۳ H), al-Khawarazmi (d. ۵۶۸ H), Ibn Asakir (۵۷۱ H), and) al-Nawawi (d. ۶۷۶ H) did NOT declare riwayat about Abu Bakr's conscription into Usamah's army as "a lie" in any of their books! In fact, Ibn Taymiyyah – from all ."indications – was the first ever human being to describe them as "a lie

:Further exposing the "lie" of Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah is this report by Imam Ibn Asakir

أخبرنا أبو بكر وجيه بن طاهر أنا أبو حامد الأزهرى أنا أبو محمد المخلدى أنا المؤمل بن الحسن نا أحمد بن منصور نا أبو النضر هاشم بن القاسم نا عاصم بن محمد عن عبيد الله بن عمر عن نافع عن ابن عمر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم استعمل أسامه بن زيد على جيش فيهم أبو بكر وعمر فطعن الناس فى عمله فخطب النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم الناس ثم قال قد بلغنى أنكم قد طعنتم فى عمل أسامه وفى عمل أبيه قبله وإن أباه لخليق للإماره وإنه لخليق للأمره يعنى أسامه وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلى فأوصيكم به

Abu Bakr Wajih b. Tahir – Abu Hamid al-Azhari – Abu Muhammad al-Makhladi – al-Muammal b. al-Hasan – Ahmad b. Mansur – Abu al-Naḍr Hashim b. al-Qasim – 'Asim :b. Muhammad – 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the commander over an army WHICH INCLUDED ABU BAKR AND 'UMAR. But, the people criticized his appointment. So, the Prophet, peace be upon

him, addressed the people, and then said: “News has reached me that you have criticized the appointment of Usamah and the appointment of his father before him. His father deserved the appointment as amir, and he too deserves the appointment as amir, that is Usamah. He is also one of the most beloved people to me. Therefore, I advise you concerning him.(١)

We know that – contrary to the wild claim of Ibn Taymiyyah – the narration actually has a known chain of transmission! So, what is its authenticity? Imam al-Dhahabi (d. ٧۴٨ H) states about the first narrator:

وجيه بن طاهر ابن محمد بن محمد بن أحمد، الشيخ العالم العدل، مسند خراسان، أبو بكر، أخو زاهر الشحامى النيسابورى

Wajih b. Tahir b. Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Ahmad, the Shaykh, the scholar, the trustworthy, the top scholar of Khurasan, Abu Bakr, brother of Zahir, al-Shahami, al-Naysaburi.(٢)

Concerning the second narrator, al-Dhahabi similarly declares:

الأزهرى :العدل، المسند، الصدوق، أبو حامد، أحمد بن الحسن بن محمد ابن الحسن بن أزهر الأزهرى، النيسابورى، الشروطى، من أولاد المحدثين.

Al-Azhari: the trustworthy, the top scholar, the highly truthful, Abu Hamid, Ahmad b. al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Azhar al-Azhari, al-Naysaburi, al-Shuruti, from the descendants of hadith scholars.(٣)

So, what about the third narrator? Al-Dhahabi has this verdict about him too:

المخلدى :الإمام الصادق المسند، أبو محمد، الحسن بن أحمد بن محمد بن الحسن بن على بن مخلد بن شيبان المخلدى النيسابورى العدل

Al-Makhladi: The truthful Imam, the top scholar, Abu Muhammad, al-Hasan b. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. ‘Ali b. Mukhlid b.

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١ - Abu al-Qasim ‘Ali b. al-Hasan b. Habat Allah b. ‘Abd Allah, Ibn Asakir al-Shafi’i,

Tarikh Madinah Dimashq (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr; ۱۴۱۵ H) [annotator: 'Ali Shiri], vol. ۸, p. ۶۰

Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala -۲ (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; ۹th edition, ۱۴۱۳ H) [annotators of the twentieth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Muhammad Na'im al-'Arqisusi], vol. ۲۰, p. ۱۰۹, ۶۷

Ibid, vol. ۱۸, p. ۲۵۴, ۱۲۷ -۳

(Shayban al-Mukhlidi al-Naysaburi, the trustworthy.[1]

Then, we proceed to the fourth narrator, and the words of al-Dhahabi concerning :him

المؤمل بن الحسن ابن عيسى بن ماسرجس المولى، الرئيس الامام المحدث المتقن، صدر خراسان، أبو الوفاء الماسرجسى النيسابورى.

Al-Muammal b. al-Hasan b. 'Isa b. Masarjisa the freed slave, the leader, the Imam, the hadith scientist, the extremely precise narrator, the foremost in Khurasan, Abu al-(Wafa al-Masarjisi al-Naysaburi.[2]

:The fifth narrator is like that too, as stated by al-Hafiz

أحمد بن منصور بن سيار البغدادى الرمادى أبو بكر ثقه حافظ طعن فيه أبو داود لمذهبه فى الوقف فى القرآن

Ahmad b. Mansur b. Sayyar al-Baghdadi al-Ramadi, Abu Bakr: Thiqah (trustworthy), a hadith scientist. Abu Dawud criticized him due to his opinion of neutrality concerning ((the creation of) the Qur'an.[3]

:Imam al-Dhahabi confirms

الرمادى :الامام الحافظ الضابط، أبو بكر، أحمد بن منصور بن سيار بن معارك، الرمادى البغدادى.

Al-Ramadi: the Imam, the hadith scientist, the accurate narrator, Abu Bakr, Ahmad b. (Mansur b. Sayyar b. Mu'arik, al-Ramadi al-Baghdadi.[4]

:Al-Hafiz has these words on the sixth narrator as well

هاشم بن القاسم بن مسلم الليثى مولاهم البغدادى أبو النضر مشهور بكنيته ولقبه قيصر ثقه ثبت

Hashim b. al-Qasim b. Muslim al-Laythi, their freed slave, al-Baghdadi, Abu al-Naḍr, well-known with his kunya and nickname Qaysar: Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt ((accurate).[5]

:About the seventh narrator, al-Hafiz proceeds

عاصم بن محمد بن زيد بن عبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب العمرى المدنى ثقه

Asim b. Muhammad b. Zayd b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab al-'Umari al-Madani:'
(Thiqah (trustworthy).(۶

:He equally states concerning the eighth narrator

عبيد الله بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن

p: ۶۳

Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala -۱ (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; ۹th edition, ۱۴۱۳ H) [annotators of the sixteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Akram al-Bushi], vol. ۱۶, p. ۵۳۹, ۳۹۵

Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala -۲ (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; ۹th edition, ۱۴۱۳ H) [annotators of the fifteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Ibrahim al-Zaybaq], vol. ۱۵, pp. ۲۱-۲۲, ۹

Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah -۳ al-'Ilmiyyah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۱۵ H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. ۱, p. ۴۷, ۱۱۳

Shams al-Din Muhammad b. Ahmad b. 'Uthman al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam al-Nubala -۴ (Beirut: Muasassat al-Risalah; ۹th edition, ۱۴۱۳ H) [annotators of the fifteenth volume: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut and Ibrahim al-Zaybaq], vol. ۱۵, p. ۳۸۹, ۱۷۰

Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah -۵ al-'Ilmiyyah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۱۵ H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. ۲, p. ۲۶۱, ۷۲۸۲

Ibid, vol. ۱, p. ۴۵۹, ۳۰۸۹ -۶

عمر بن الخطاب العمرى المدنى أبو عثمان ثقه ثبت

Ubayd Allah b. ‘Umar b. Hafs b. ‘Asim b. ‘Umar b. al-Khattab al-‘Umari al-Madani, Abu‘ ‘Uthman: Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt (accurate).(1)

:And, with regards to the last narrator, he declares

نافع أبو عبد الله المدنى مولى ابن عمر ثقه ثبت فقيه مشهور

Nafi’, Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Madani, freed slave of Ibn ‘Umar: Thiqah (trustworthy), thabt (accurate), a well-known jurist.(2)

So, the chain is fully connected and all the narrators are trusted people. Therefore, it .is sahih, or at least hasan

Furthermore, there is a mutaba’ah for Asim b. Muhammad, documented by Imam al-:Bazzar

حدثنا محمد بن حسان الأزرق، حدثنا أبو النضر، حدثنا عاصم بن عمر، عن عبيد الله بن عمر، عن نافع، عن ابن عمر أَن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم استعمل أسامه بن زيد على جيش فيهم أبو بكر وعمر فطعن الناس فى عمله ، فخطب النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال قد بلغنى أنكم طعنتم فى عمل أسامه وفى عمل أبيه من قبله، وإن أباه كان خليقا للإماره وإنه لخليق للإماره يعنى أسامه وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلى وإنى أوصيكم به أحسبه قال خيرا.

Muhammad b. Hassan al-Azraq – Abu al-Naḍr – ‘Asim b. ‘Umar – ‘Ubayd Allah b. :‘Umar – Nafi’ – Ibn ‘Umar

The Prophet, peace be upon him, appointed Usamah b. Zayd as commander over an army which included Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. So, people criticized his appointment. As a result, the Prophet, peace be upon him, delivered a sermon and said, “News has reached me that you criticized the appointment of Usamah and the appointment

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Ibid, vol. ۱, p. ۶۳۷, ۴۳۴۰ -۱

Ibid, vol. ۲, p. ۲۳۹, ۷۱۱۱ -۲

of his father before him. Verily, his father deserved the appointment as amir, and he too deserves the appointment as amir, that is Usamah. He is also one of the most (beloved of mankind to me. I advise you to think good of him.”(١)

:Al-Bazzar comments

وهـذا الحـديث لا نعلم رواه عن عبيد الله بن بن عمر إلا عاصم بن عمر، وإنما يعرف من حديث موسـى بن عقبه ، عن سالم، عن أَبِيه.

We do not know anyone who has narrated this hadith from ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Umar except ‘Asim b. ‘Umar, and it is only known through the hadith of Musa b. ‘Uqbah, from (Salim, from his father.(٢)

The mistake of al-Bazzar is apparent. ‘Asim b. Muhammad also narrated it from ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Umar, apart from Asim b. ‘Umar. Obviously, al-Bazzar did not have sufficient information concerning the transmission of this hadith. In fact, his mistake becomes clearer when we consider his statement that the narration is known only through the hadith of Musa b. ‘Uqbah. If, by the hadith of this Musa, he meant the narration on Usamah’s army without the explicit mention of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar (and this is most likely al-Bazzar’s position), then certainly he was in error, as ‘Abd Allah b. Dinar also related that. In any case, the misjudgements of scholars are never .accepted as proofs in academic researches

In the chain of ‘Asim b. ‘Umar above, we already know that Abu al-Naḍr, ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Umar and Nafi’ were thiqah (trustworthy). So, we are left with

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١- Abu Bakr Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. ‘Abd al-Khaliq al-Bazzar, Musnad al-Bazzar (Madinah al-Munawwarah: Maktabah al-‘Ulum wa al-Hukm; ١st edition) [annotator: ‘Adil b. Sa’d], vol. ١٢, p. ١۵۵, ۵٧۵۴

٢- Ibid

only Muhammad b. Hassan al-Azraq and 'Asim b. 'Umar to investigate. Well, al-Azraq too is thiqah (trustworthy) according to al-Hafiz:

محمد بن حسان بن فيروز الشيبانى الأزرق أبو جعفر البغدادى التاجر أصله من واسط ثقه

Muhammad b. Hassan b. Fayruz al-Shaybani al-Azraq, Abu Ja'far al-Baghdadi al-Tajir, his root was from Wasit: Thiqah (trustworthy).(١)

However, as confirmed by al-Hafiz, 'Asim b. 'Umar was weak:

عاصم بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب العمرى أبو عمر المدنى ضعيف من السابعه وهو أخو عبيد الله العمرى.

'Asim b. 'Umar b. Hafs b. 'Asim b. 'Umar b. al-Khattab al-'Umari, Abu 'Umar al-Madani: Ḍa'if (weak). He was from the seventh (tabaqah), and he was the brother of 'Ubayd Allah al-'Umari.(٢)

Yet, the chain of al-Bazzar is sahih li ghayrihi due to the corroboration of 'Asim b. 'Umar by 'Asim b. Muhammad, from 'Ubayd Allah in the riwayah of Ibn Asakir.

Finally, Imam Ibn Sa'd has a third report:

حدثنا عبد الوهاب بن عطاء العجلى قال أخبرنا العمرى عن نافع عن بن عمر أن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم بعث سريه فيهم أبو بكر وعمر استعمل عليهم أسامه بن زيد فكان الناس طعنوا فيه أى فى صغره فبلغ ذلك رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فصعد المنبر فحمد الله وأثنى عليه وقال إن الناس قد طعنوا فى إماره أسامه وقد كانوا طعنوا فى إماره أبيه من قبله وإنهما لخليقان لها وإنه لمن أحب الناس إلى آلا فأوصيكم بأسامه خيرا

'Abd al-Wahhab b. 'Ata al-'Ijli – al-'Umari – Nafi' – Ibn 'Umar:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, deployed an army. Among them were

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١ - Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah; ٢nd edition, ١۴١۵ H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. ٢, p. ۶۶, ۵٨٢٧

٢ - Ibid, vol. ١, p. ۴۵٨, ٣٠٧٩

Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. He appointed Usamah b. Zayd over them as their commander. So, people criticized it, that was his young age. News of that reached the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him. Therefore, he climbed the pulpit, thanked Allah and extolled Him, and said, “People have criticized the appointment of Usamah as amir. They had earlier criticized the appointment of his father as amir before him. Yet, both of them (i.e. Usamah and his father) deserve it (i.e. the commandership), and he (Usamah) is one of the most beloved of mankind to me. Verily, I advise you to be good (to Usamah.(١)

We know about Nafi’ already. So, we only have to investigate the first and second :narrators. Al-Hafiz says about the first narrator

عبد الوهاب بن عطاء الخفاف أبو نصر العجلى مولاهم البصرى نزيل بغداد صدوق ربما أخطأ أنكروا عليه حديثا فى العباس يقال دلسه عن ثور

Abd al-Wahhab b. ‘Ata al-Khaffaf, Abu Nasr al-‘Ijli, their freed slave, al-Basri, a‘ resident of Baghdad: Saduq (very truthful), maybe he made mistakes. They denied a hadith from him about al-‘Abbas. It is said that he narrated it in an ‘an-‘an manner (from Thawr.(٢)

The second narrator is al-‘Umari. His name is ‘Abd Allah. Al-Hafiz declares concerning :him

عبد الله بن عمر بن حفص بن عاصم بن عمر بن الخطاب أبو عبد الرحمن العمرى المدنى ضعيف عابد

Abd Allah b. ‘Umar b. Hafs b. ‘Asim b. ‘Umar b. al-Khattab, Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman‘ (al-‘Umari al-Madani: Ḍa’if (weak), a great worshipper of Allah.(٣)

However, this defect in the

Muhammad b. Sa’d, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir), vol. ٢, p. ٢۴٩ -١

Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah - ٢ al-‘Ilmiyyah; ٢nd edition, ١۴١۵ H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. ١, pp. ۶٢۶-

۶۲۷, ۴۲۷۶

Ibid, vol. ۱, p. ۵۱۶, ۳۵۰۰ -۳

chain of Ibn Sa'd is removed by the corroboration of 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar by 'Ubayd Allah b. 'Umar. Both have transmitted the same report from the same Nafi'. As such, .the sanad of Ibn Sa'd is hasan li ghayrih due to al-Khaffaf

So, there is a sahih li dhatihi (i.e. independently sahih) or hasan li dhatihi (i.e. independently hasan) chain for the hadith of Ibn 'Umar which places Abu Bakr and 'Umar in the army of Usamah. There is another, which is sahih li ghayrihi (i.e. sahih by corroboration), ad there is a third that is hasan li ghayrihi (i.e. hasan by corroboration). Each of these chains sufficiently establishes the fact that both Abu Bakr and 'Umar were conscripts under Usamah's command. Of course, the army of Usamah was .mobilized on Saturday, two days before the final breath of the Messenger of Allah

Among the Sunni scholars of narrations, one of their earliest to affirm this fact was :'Urwah b. al-Zubayr. Imam Ibn Hibban says concerning him

عروه بن الزبير بن العوام القرشى أخو عبد الله بن الزبير أمهما أسماء بنت أبى بكر الصديق من فقهاء المدينه وأفاضل التابعين وعباد قريش

Urwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam al-Qurshi, the brother of 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr.' Their mother was Asma bint Abi Bakr al-Siddiq. He was one of the jurists of Madinah, and one of the best of the Tabi'in, and one of the devout worshippers from (Quraysh.(١)

Al-Hafiz, who grades him "thiqah" (trustworthy)(٢), further states that he narrated from many of the Sahabah, including his

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١- Abu Hatim Muhammad b. Hibban b. Ahmad al-Tamimi al-Busti, Mashahir 'Ulama al-Amsar (Dar al-Wafa li al-Taba'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'; ١st edition, ١٤١١ H) [annotator: Marzuq 'Ali Ibrahim], p. ١٠٥, ٤٢٨

٢- See Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah; ٢nd edition, ١٤١٥ H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. ١, p. ٦٧١, ٤٥٧٧

father (al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam), his mother Asma bint Abi Bakr, Umm al-Muminin 'Aishah, Amir al-Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib, 'alaihi al-salam, Zayd b. Thabit, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Usamah b. Zayd, Abu Ayub al-Ansari, Abu Hurayrah, Umm Salamah, and Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari(١). Apparently, 'Urwah was no small fish in Sunni hadith scholarship. So, did he really claim that the report – which states that Abu Bakr and 'Umar were part of Usamah's army - was "a lie", as alleged by Shaykh Ibn ?Taymiyyah

:Imam Ibn Abi Shaybah records his clear testimony here

حدثنا عبد الرحيم بن سليمان عن هشام بن عروه عن أبيه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان قطع بعثا قبل موته وأمر عليهم أسامه بن زيد، وفى ذلك البعث أبو بكر وعمر

:(Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman – Hisham b. 'Urwah – his father ('Urwah b. al-Zubayr'

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, deployed an army before his death and appointed Usamah b. Zayd as the amir over them. In that army were Abu Bakr and ('Umar.(٢

:The first narrator is thiqah (trustworthy), as stated by al-Hafiz

عبد الرحيم بن سليمان الكنانى أو الطائى أبو على الأشل المروزى نزيل الكوفه ثقه

Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman al-Kanani or al-Tai, Abu 'Ali al-Ushil al-Maruzi, a resident ' (of Kufah: Thiqah (trustworthy).(٣

:Hisham too, the son of 'Urwah, was like that, according to al-Hafiz

هشام بن عروه بن الزبير بن العوام الأسدى ثقه فقيه ربما دلس

Hisham b. 'Urwah b. al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwam al-Asadi: Thiqah (trustworthy), a jurist, (maybe he did tadlis.(۴

So, the chain is sahih up

۱- See Shihab al-Din Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib (Dar al-Fikr; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۴ H), vol. ۷, pp. ۱۶۳-۱۶۴, ۳۵۲

۲- Abd Allah b. Muhammad b. Abi Shaybah Ibrahim b. ‘Uthman b. Abi Bakr b. Abi‘ Shaybah al-Kufi al-‘Ubsi, Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah fi al-Ahadith wa al-Athar (Dar al-Fikr; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۹ H) [annotator: Prof. Sa’id al-Laham], vol. ۷, p. ۵۳۲, ۳

۳- Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Taqrib al-Tahdhib (Beirut: Dar al-Maktabah al-‘Ilmiyyah; ۲nd edition, ۱۴۱۵ H) [annotator: Mustafa ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata], vol. ۱, p. ۵۹۸, ۴۰۷۰

۴- Ibid, vol. ۲, p. ۲۶۷, ۷۳۲۸

:to ‘Urwah. Shaykh Dr. Asad confirms this while treating another riwayah

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبى شيبه حدثنا عبد الرحيم بن سليمان عن هشام بن عروه عن أبيه عن عائشه... إسناده صحيح

Abu Bakr b. Abi Shaybah – ‘Abd al-Rahim b. Sulayman – Hisham b. ‘Urwah – his father ()– ‘Aishah ... Its chain is sahih.(١)

He actually believed the incident to have been true, and had taught it to his son! So, :basically, the following claims of Ibn Taymiyyah are false

.The hadith mentioning Abu Bakr in the army of Usamah is false .١

All the Sunni scholars of narrations, up till his time, had each explicitly declared that .٢ .”hadith to have been “a lie

.The hadith does not have any known chain of narration .٣

:The truth, as we have proved through Allah’s Grace, is below

.That hadith has been narrated by one independently sahih or hasan chain .١

It has also been narrated by one sahih li ghayrihi chain, as well as another which is .٢ .hasan li ghayrihi

!No scholar before Ibn Taymiyyah ever called the hadith “a lie” – not a single one .٣

Instead, ‘Urwah, who was one of the greatest scholars of narrations in Sunni Islam .۴ !affirmed that both Abu Bakr and ‘Umar were really in the army of Usamah

So, Abu Bakr was conscripted into the army of Usamah during the Prophet’s fatal illness. Moreover, it was only the despatch of the army for war that occurred on Saturday, two days before the Messenger’s death. The army itself had been formed long

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Abu Ya’la Ahmad b. ‘Ali b. Muthanna al-Mawsili al-Tamimi, Musnad (Damascus: Dar -١

al-Mamun li al-Turath; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۴ H) [annotator: Dr. Husayn Salim Asad], vol. ۷, p. ۴۲۵, ۴۴۷

:before then. Al-Hafiz comes in once again

قوله) باب بعث النبى صـلى الله عليه وسـلم أسامه بن زيـد فى مرضه الذى توفى فيه (إنما أخر المصـنف هذه الترجمه لما جاء أنه كان تجهيز أسامه يوم السبت قبل موت النبى صـلى الله عليه وسلم بيومين وكان ابتداء ذلك قبل مرض النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فنـدب الناس لغزو الروم فى آخر صـفر ودعا أسامه فقال سـر إلى موضع مقتل أبيك فأوطئهم الخيل فقـد وليتك هـذا الجيش ... فبدأ برسول الله صـلى الله عليه وسـلم وجعه فى اليوم الثالث فعقد لأسامه لواء بيده فأخذه أسامه فدفعه إلى بريده وعسكر بالجرف وكان ممن انتدب مع أسامه كبار المهاجرين والأنصار منهم أبو بكر وعمر ... ثم أشتد برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وجعه فقال أنفذوا بعث أسامه

His statement (Chapter on the Appointment of Usamah b. Zayd by the Prophet, peace be upon him, during his Fatal Illness): The author (i.e. al-Bukhari) has only given this biography a late timing due to what is narrated that the mobilization of Usamah (for war) was on Saturday, two days before the death of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Meanwhile, the beginning of that was before the illness of the Prophet, peace be upon him. He had delegated people to go to war with Rome at the end of Safar and called Usamah and said, “Go to the place where your father was martyred. Equip them with ”....the horses, for I have appointed you as the wali of this army

Then, the illness of the Messenger of Allah

began on the third day (of the next month, Rabi' al-Awwal), and he passed the flag to Usamah, who in turn passed to Buraydah. Solders were (camped) at al-Jurf. Among those conscripted with Usamah were senior Muhajirun and Ansar, among them Abu Bakr, 'Umar ... Then, the illness of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, became (serious, and he said, "Dispatch the army of Usamah."(١)

The Prophet of Allah died on the ١٢th of Rabi' al-Awwal. His formation of the army of Usamah occurred in the end of the preceding month – Safar - before his fatal illness. On the ٣rd day of Rabi' al-Awwal, nine days from his death, he passed the flag of war to Usamah, the commander. His soldiers were already at their military camp at al-Jurf. He included the senior Muhajirun and Ansar in the army, and made Usamah – a teenager – their amir. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were among the soldiers under him. The Messenger's illness became very serious on Thursday, such that he was unable to lead the 'Isha prayer of its evening. On the following Saturday – two days before his .demise - he gave an order for the dispatch of the army for war

Both Abu Bakr and 'Umar were soldiers under Usamah in this expedition. So, they were supposed to be with their colleagues at al-Jurf. But, they both jumped camp and stayed in Madinah instead! This, undeniably, was in unmistakable disobedience to the .Command of Allah and His Messenger

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١ - Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah li al-Taba'ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ٨, p. ١١٥

This made them mutineers. Interestingly, our brothers from the Ahl al-Sunnah want us to believe that one of these mutineers was then rewarded by the Rasul with leadership of the salat in his mosque?! How is that even logical? Moreover, their only evidence are only a bunch of warring reports, each of them slashing the throat of the other! Besides, Abu Bakr was NOT even qualified to lead either the Messenger or the Sahabah in salat, to begin with! Why then would the Prophet of Allah appoint an ?unqualified mutineer as salat leader for his obedient, qualified disciples

?Were The Sahabah Expecting Abu Bakr's Reign .۸

Or, was it a sudden affair for them? The Ahl al-Sunnah often insist that Abu Bakr's alleged leadership of salat was effectively his appointment by the Prophet, sallallahu 'alaihi wa alihi, as the first khalifah over the Ummah. Normally, if this had been the case, then all of the Sahabah would have regarded Abu Bakr's "succession" to the Messenger a natural process. In fact, every single one of them would have considered Abu Bakr the khalifah-designate; and they all would have been shocked if he had not become the ruler after Muhammad. However, it seems that the reverse was the reality. The Sahabah were surprised when they learnt that Abu Bakr was claiming the khilafah. They apparently were not expecting him to be their next ruler. :This is what Imam al-Bukhari (d. ۲۵۶ H) reports

حدثنا عبد العزيز بن عبد الله حدثني إبراهيم بن سعد عن صالح عن ابن شهاب عن عبيد

الله بن عبد الله بن عتبه بن مسعود عن ابن عباس قال : كنت أقرئ رجالا من المهاجرين منهم عبد الرحمن بن عوف فبينما أنا فى منزله بمنى وهو عند عمر بن الخطاب فى آخر حجه حجها إذ رجع إلى عبد الرحمن فقال لو رأيت رجلا أتى أمير المؤمنين اليوم فقال يا أمير المؤمنين هل لك فى فلان ؟ يقول لو قد مات عمر لقد بايعت فلانا فوالله ما كانت بيعه أبى بكر إلا فلته فتمت فغضب عمر ثم قال إنى إن شاء الله لقائم العشيه فى الناس فمحذرهم هؤلاء الذين يريدون أن يغصبوهم أمورهم ... فجلس عمر على المنبر فلما سكت المؤذنون قام فأثنى على الله بما هو أهله ثم قال أما بعد ... إنه بلغنى قائل منكم يقول والله لو قد مات عمر بايعت فلانا فلا يغترن امرؤ أن يقول إنما كانت بيعه أبى بكر فلته وتمت ألا وإنها قد كانت كذلك ولكن الله وقى شرها وليس فيكم من تقطع الأعناق إليه مثل أبى بكر من بايع رجلا من غير مشوره من المسلمين فلا يتابع هو ولا الذى تابعه تغره أن يقتلا وإنه قد كان من خبرنا حين توفى الله نبيه صلى الله عليه و سلم أن الأنصار خالفونا واجتمعوا بأسرهم فى سقيفه بنى ساعده وخالف عنا على والزبير ومن معهما واجتمع المهاجرون إلى أبى بكر فقلت لأبى بكر يا أبا بكر انطلق بنا إلى إخواننا هؤلاء من الأنصار فانطلقنا نريدهم فلما دنونا منهم لقينا منهم رجلان صالحان فذكرا ما تمالأ عليه القوم فقالا أين تريدون يا معشر المهاجرين ؟ فقلنا نريد إخواننا هؤلاء من الأنصار فقالا لا

عليكم أن لا تقربوهم اقضوا أمركم فقلت والله لنأتينهم فانطلقنا حتى أتيناهم فى سقيفه بنى ساعده فإذا رجل مزمل بين ظهرانيهم فقلت من هذا ؟ فقالوا هذا سعد بن عباده فقلت ما له ؟ قالوا يوعك فلما جلسنا قليلا تشهد خطيبهم فأثنى على الله بما هو أهله ثم قال أما بعد فنحن أنصار الله وكتيبه الإسلام وأنتم معشر المهاجرين رهط وقد دفت دافه من قومكم فإذا هم يريدون أن يختزلونا من أصلنا وأن يحضنونا من الأمر . فلما سكت أردت أن أتكلم وكنت قد زورت مقاله أعجبتنى أردت أن أقدمها بين يدى أبى بكر وكنت أدارى منه بعض الحد فلما أردت أن أتكلم قال أبو بكر على رسلك فكرهت أن أغضبه فتكلم أبو بكر فكان هو أحلم منى وأوقر والله ما ترك من كلمه أعجبتنى فى تزويرى إلا قال فى بديهته مثلها أو أفضل منها حتى سكت فقال ما ذكرتم فيكم من خير فأنتم له أهل ولن يعرف هذا الأمر إلا لهذا الحى من قريش هم أوسط العرب نسبا ودارا.

Abd al-‘Aziz b. ‘Abd Allah – Ibrahim b. Sa’d – Salih – Ibn Shihab – ‘Ubayd Allah b. ‘Abd‘ :Allah b. ‘Utbah b. Mas’ud – Ibn ‘Abbas

I used to teach qirat to some men from the Muhajirun, among them were ‘Abd al-Rahman b. ‘Awf. So, while I was in his house in Mina, and he was with ‘Umar b. al-Khattab during the last Hajj which he performed, ‘Abd al-Rahman came to me and said, “If only you had seen a man who came to Amir al-Muminin today, saying: ‘O Amir !al-Muminin

What do you say about so-and-so? He says, “When ‘Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to so-and-so, for, I swear by Allah, the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr was nothing but an error and it succeeded.”’ So, ‘Umar became angry. Then, he said, ‘Insha Allah, I will stand before the people tonight and will warn them against .”...these people who want to usurp their affairs

So, ‘Umar sat on the pulpit, and when the muezzins became silent, he stood up. He :praised Allah as He deserved. Then he said

Now then ... I have been informed that a speaker amongst you says, ‘I swear by“ Allah, when ‘Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to so-and-so.’ One should not deceive oneself by saying that the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr was an error and it succeeded. NO DOUBT, IT WAS SURELY LIKE THAT. However, Allah saved from its EVIL. And there is none amongst you towards whom throats are slit like Abu Bakr. Whosoever pledges allegiance to anyone without consultation with the Muslims, then neither that person nor the person to whom the pledge of allegiance was given, is to .be supported. Rather, they both should be killed

And, verily, there was someone who informed us when Allah took the life of His Prophet, peace be upon him, that the Ansar opposed us and gathered, all of them, at Saqifah Bani Sa’idah; and ‘Ali, al-Zubayr and whoever was with them both, also opposed us; and the Muhajirun gathered towards Abu

.Bakr

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So, I said to Abu Bakr, ‘O Abu Bakr! Let us go to these brothers of ours from the Ansar’. As a result, we went, seeking them. When we approached them, two righteous men from them met us, and informed us of the final decision of the people, and both of them said, ‘O group of Muhajirun, where are you going?’ Then, we said, ‘We are going to these brothers of ours from the Ansar.’ They said, ‘You should not go near them. Decide your affair.’ So, I said, ‘I swear by Allah, we will go to them.’ Therefore, we went until we reached them at Saqifah Bani Sa’idah. There was a wrapped man amongst them. Then, I said, ‘Who is that?’ They said, ‘This is Sa’d b. ‘Ubadah.’ Then, I said, ‘What is wrong with him?’ They said, ‘He is sick’.

After we had sat for a little period, their speaker testified. He praised Allah as He deserved. Then, he said, ‘Now then, we are the Ansar (Helpers) of Allah and the battalion of Islam, and you Muhajirun are a small group. Some people from your people have come, seeking to cut us off from our root and to prevent us from authority.’ When he became silent, I intended to talk and I had prepared a speech which I really loved. I intended to deliver it in the presence of Abu Bakr, and I used to avoid provoking him. So, when I wanted to speak, Abu Bakr said, ‘Wait

.a while', and I hated to make him angry

Therefore, Abu Bakr spoke, and he was more patient and more dignified than I was. I swear by Allah, he did not miss a sentence that I really loved from my prepared speech, except that he said the like of it or better than it spontaneously, until he fell silent. So, he said, 'What you stated about yourself in terms of good things, you truly deserve it. And this authority will never be recognized except for this living person (from Quraysh. They are the best of the Arabs in terms of lineage and family.'"(١

Umar, who told his staunchly pro-Abu Bakr version of what happened, nonetheless' gives us insights into the state of the Ummah immediately after the death of its :Prophet. The Sahabah were divided into three political camps

;a) the camp of Abu Bakr and his supporters)

b) the camp of 'Ali, 'alaihi al-salam, supported by al-Zubayr, and their supporters;) and

.c) the camp of the Ansar)

The Ansar held the military advantage, being the overwhelming majority of the Islamic soldiers. The Muhajirun were only a small group, with little or no numerical or military significance. Yet, they were nonetheless divided into the opposing camps of Abu Bakr and 'Ali. What we get from all this, is that the Ansar – who had numerical and military strength – were united while the Muhajirun – despite their serious numerical .and military disadvantages – were divided

Naturally, whoever controlled the Ansar would hold the real political

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Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ibrahim b. Mughirah al-Bukhari al-Ju'fi, al- -١ Jami' al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar (Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir; ٣rd edition, ١۴٠٧ H) [annotator: Dr. Mustafa Dib al-Bagha], vol. ۶, p. ٢۵٠٣, ۶۴۴٢

and military powers. ‘Umar was well aware of this. Therefore, instead of going to the camp of ‘Ali to resolve the political dispute, he took the party of Abu Bakr to the Ansar, to try to win them over. Moreover, looking at the arguments of Abu Bakr against the Ansar, one understands fully why he would never have gone to ‘Ali anyway, even if the latter had had the numerical and military advantages. Abu Bakr argued on the strengths of lineage and family. The tribe of Quraysh were of the best human lineage, and they were the best family. So, the Muslims – especially those in other parts of Arabia – would never recognize the rule of a khalifah from the Ansar. This tactic was clearly to make the Ansar see the futility of their political efforts. They were not from Quraysh, and the generality of the Muslims would never accept the rule of a non-Qurayshi. The strategy worked, and the Ansar backed down, and supported Abu Bakr .instead

As for ‘Ali, he was also from Quraysh. As such, Abu Bakr’s arguments about lineage and family would not have worked in his case. In fact, they would have backfired terribly. Imam Muslim (d. ۲۶۱ H) documents that the Messenger of Allah had declared :the Banu Hashim as the best of Quraysh

حدثنا محمد بن مهران الرازى ومحمد بن عبدالرحمن بن سهم جميعا عن الوليد قال ابن مهران حدثنا الوليد بن مسلم حدثنا الأوزاعى عن أبى عمار شداد أنه سمع واثله بن الأسقع

يقول سـمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول إن الله اصطفى كنانه من ولد إسماعيل واصطفى قريشا من كنانه واصطفى من قريش بنى هاشم واصطفانى من بنى هاشم

Muhammad b. Mihran al-Razi and Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Sahm – al-Walid b. Muslim – al-Awza'i – Abu 'Ammar Shaddad – Wathilah b. al-Asqa':

I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, saying: "Verily, Allah chose Kinanah from the children of Isma'il, and chose Quraysh from Kinanah, and He chose Banu Hashim from Quraysh, and He chose me from Banu Hashim". (١)

Commenting on this hadith, Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (d. ٧٢٨ H) states:

وهـذا كله بناء على أن الصـلاه والسـلام على آل محمـد وأهل بيته تقتضـى أن يكونوا أفضل من سائر أهل البيوت وهـذا مذهب أهـل السـنه والجماعه الـذين يقولون بنو هاشم أفضل قريش وقريش أفضل العرب والعرب أفضل بنى آدم وهـذا هو المنقول عن أئمه السـنه كما ذكره حرب الكرمانى عمن لقيهم مثل أحمـد وإسـحاق وسـعيد بن منصور وعبـد الله بن الزبير الحميـدى وغيرهم وذهبت طائفه إلى منع التفضـيل بذلك كما ذكره القاضـى أبو بكر والقاضى أبو يعلى فى المعتمد وغيرهما و الأول اصح فإنه قد ثبت عن النبى صـلى الله عليه و سـلم فى الصـحيح أنه قـال لأـن الله اصـطفى كنـانه من ولـد إسـماعيل واصـطفى قريش من كنانه واصطفى هاشما من قريش واصطفانى من بنى هاشم

All of this is based upon the fact that sending salat and salam upon the family of Muhammad and his Ahl al-Bayt establishes absolutely that they are better than all other people. And this is

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١- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi], vol. ۴, p. ١٧٨٢, (١) ٢٢٧۶

the position of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, who say that Banu Hashim are the best of Quraysh, and that Quraysh are the best of the Arabs, and that Arabs are the best of the Children of Adam. This is narrated from the Imams of the Sunnah - as Harb al-Kirmani mentioned from those who met them - such as Ahmad, Ishaq, Sa'id b. Mansur, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr al-Humaydi and others. A group are of the opinion that superiority cannot be established through that, as stated by al-Qaḍi Abu Bakr, and by al-Qaḍi Abu Ya'la in al-Mu'tamad, and others. However, the first opinion is more correct, for it is authentically narrated in the sahih hadith that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Verily, Allah chose Kinanah from the children of Isma'il, and chose Quraysh from Kinanah, and He chose Hashim from Quraysh, and He chose me (from Banu Hashim"(١)

Meanwhile, Amir al-Muminin 'Ali b. Abi Talib was from Banu Hashim like the Messenger, while Abu Bakr was not. Therefore, in terms of lineage, 'Ali was superior .to Abu Bakr

:Moreover, Imam Ahmad (d. ٢٤١ H) further records

حدثنا عبد الله حدثنى أبى ثنا أبو نعيم عن سفيان عن يزيد بن أبى زياد عن عبد الله بن الحرث بن نوفل عن المطلب بن أبى وداعه قال قال العباس بلغه بعض ما يقول الناس قال فصعد المنبر فقال من أنا قالوا أنت رسول الله فقال أنا محمد بن عبد الله بن عبد المطلب ان الله خلق الخلق فجعلنى فى خير خلقه وجعلهم فرقتين

١- Abu al-'Abbas Ahmad b. 'Abd al-Halim b. Taymiyyah al-Harrani, Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah (Muasassat Qurtubah; ١st edition, ١٤٠٦ H) [annotator: Dr. Muhammad Rashad Salim], vol. ٧, pp. ٢٤٣-٢٤٤

فجعلنى فى خير فرقه وخلق القبائل فجعلنى فى خير قبيله وجعلهم بيوتا فجعلنى فى خيرهم بيتا فأنا خيركم بيتا وخيركم نفسا

Abd Allah (b. Ahmad) – my father (Ahmad b. Hanbal) – Abu Na'im – Sufyan – Yazid b.' :Abi Ziyad – 'Abd Allah b. al-Harith b. Nawfal – al-Mutalib b. Abi Wada'ah – al-'Abbas

The words of some people reached him. So, he climbed the pulpit and asked, "Who am I?" They answered, "You are the Messenger of Allah." So, he said, "I am Muhammad, the son of 'Abd Allah, the son of 'Abd al-Mutalib. Verily, Allah created the creation and put me among the best of His creation. He made them into two groups, and put me in the best group. He created the tribes and put me in the best tribe. He created homes and put me among those of them with the best home. So, I am of the best home (among you, and I am of the best personality among you."(١

:Shaykh al-Arnaut comments

حسن لغيره

.(It is hasan due to supporting evidence(٢

:Allamah al-Albani also says concerning the hadith'

صحيح

(Sahih(٣

Here, we know that Quraysh – the tribe of Muhammad – is the best of all tribes. Of course, Banu Hashim are the best of the clans of Quraysh. Also, we equally know from the hadith that the house of Muhammad – his family – is the best of all families. 'Ali belonged to this same house of the Prophet, and Abu Bakr did not. So, 'Ali beat Abu Bakr completely on

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١- Abu 'Abd Allah Ahmad b. Hanbal al-Shaybani, Musnad (Cairo: Muasassat Qurtubah) [annotator: Shu'ayb al-Arnaut], vol. ١, p. ٢١٠, ١٧٨٨

٢- Ibid

Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Nasir al-Din b. al-Hajj Nuh b. Tajati b. Adam al- -٣
Ashqudri al-Albani, Sahih al-Jami’ al-Saghir wa Ziyadatuhu (Al-Maktab al-Islami), vol.
١, p. ٣٠٩, ١٤٧٢

lineage and family. No wonder, Abu Bakr made no attempt to go to him. Instead, he rushed to the camp with weaker claims in terms of lineage and family, and defeated .them on both accounts

Interestingly, the fact that the Ansar submitted to Abu Bakr's arguments about lineage and family shows that the generality of the Sahabah considered both as the primary criteria for the khilafah. Moreover, the fact that they would not recognize the authority of any khalifah from the Ansar – however pious, knowledgeable and competent – reveals that they viewed the khilafah only as a dynasty, the dynasty of the offspring of Quraysh. In order to make this clearer, if the Ahl al-Sunnah were to choose a khalifah today, they would only pick a man from Quraysh even if there are millions of far better candidates within the Ummah from the other tribes and races. This tells that the most very first criterion for leadership in Sunni Islam is the tribe of .the ruler; and that is exactly why it is a dynasty

The Prophet of Allah also limited the khilafah to a specific family within the Quraysh. Therefore, if you are not from that family, you are not a legitimate khalifah. Imam Ibn :Abi Shaybah (d. ٢٣٥ H) reports

أبو داود عمر بن سعد عن شريك عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان عن زيد بن ثابت يرفعه قال : إنى تركت فيكم الخليفتين كاملتين :كتاب الله وعترتى، وإنهما لن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض.

– Abu Dawud 'Umar b. Sa'd

p: ٨٣

:Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit – the Prophet

I have left behind over you the two all-comprehensive khalifahs: the Book of Allah“ and my offspring. Verily, both shall never separate from each other until they meet (me at the Lake-Fount.”(١

:The annotators declare

والحديث صحيح

(The hadith is sahih.(٢

:Imam Ibn Abi ‘Asim (d. ٢٨٧ H) has recorded it as well

ثنا أبو بكر، ثنا عمرو بن سعد أبو داود الحفرى، عن شريك، عن الركين عن القاسم بن حسان، عن زيد بن ثابت قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنى تارك فيكم الخليفتين من بعدى، كتاب الله وعترتى أهل بيتى وإنهما لن يتفرقا حتى يردا على الحوض.

Abu Bakr – ‘Amr b. Sa’d Abu Dawud al-Hafari – Sharik – al-Rukayn – al-Qasim b. :Hassan – Zayd b. Thabit

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said, “I am leaving behind over you the two khalifahs after me: the Book of Allah and my offspring, my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily, both (shall never separate from each other until they meet me at the Lake-Fount.”(٣

:And ‘Allamah al-Albani (d. ١٤٢٠ H) states

حديث صحيح.

(It is a sahih hadith.(٤

Apparently, if you are not from the offspring of Muhammad, from his Ahl al-Bayt, you are nothing but an illegitimate khalifah. It is that simple and straightforward. Abu Bakr, without any doubt, was NOT from the offspring of the Prophet, neither by blood nor by special designation. As for ‘Ali, he was specially included within that blessed ,offspring by the Messenger himself, on the Command of Allah

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۱ - Abu Bakr ‘Abd Allah b. Abi Shaybah, Musnad Ibn Abi Shaybah (Riyadh: Dar al-Watan; ۱st edition, ۱۴۱۸ H) [annotators: ‘Adil b. Yusuf al-‘Azazi and Ahmad b. Farid al-Mazidi], vol. ۱, p. ۱۰۸

۲- Ibid

۳- Abu Bakr b. Abi ‘Asim, Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. al-Ḍahhak b. Mukhlid al-Shaybani, Kitab al-Sunnah (al-Maktab al-Islami; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۰ H) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, pp. ۳۵۰-۳۵۱, ۷۵۴

۴- Ibid, vol. ۲, p. ۳۵۱, ۷۵۴

for the specific purpose of the khilafah. Ibn Abi ‘Asim (d. ٢٨٧ H) again documents:

ثنا محمد بن المثنى، حدثنا يحى بن حماد، عن أبى عوانه، عن يحيى بن سليم أبى بلج عن عمرو بن ميمون، عن ابن عباس قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لعلى: أنت منى بمنزله هارون من موسى إلا أنك لست نبيا وأنت خليفتى فى كل مؤمن من بعدى.

Muhammad b. al-Muthanna – Yahya b. Hammad – Abu ‘Awanah – Yahya b. Sulaym Abu Balj – ‘Amr b. Maymun – Ibn ‘Abbas: The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said to ‘Ali: “You are to me of the status of Harun to Musa, with the exception that you are not a prophet. And you are my khalifah over every believer after me.”(١)

Dr. al-Jawabirah says:

اسناده حسن.

Its chain is hasan.(٢)

And ‘Allamah al-Albani (d. ١٤٢٠ H) backs him:

إسناده حسن

Its chain is hasan.(٣)

So, obviously, the Prophet had already fully settled the issues of al-khilafah before he died:

(a) ‘Ali was the first khalifah immediately after him;

(b) then, the khilafah passes, after ‘Ali, to the children of Fatimah till the Day of al-Qiyamah.

This was the Decree of Allah, and it shall be in force till the end of our planet. Clearly, there was never any vacancy in the khilafah at all, and there will never be. The very moment that the Messenger of the Lord departed, all his powers, authorities and leadership responsibilities naturally passed to Amir al-Muminin, his publicly designated successor. However, Allah had also revealed to His Prophet that

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۱- Abu Bakr b. Abi ‘Asim, Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. al-Ḍahhak b. Mukhlid al-Shaybani, Kitab al-Sunnah (Dar al-Sami’i li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’) [annotator: Dr. Basim b. Faysal al-Jawabirah], vol. ۱, pp. ۷۹۹-۸۰۰, ۱۲۲۲

۲- Ibid

۳- Abu Bakr b. Abi ‘Asim, Ahmad b. ‘Amr b. al-Ḍahhak b. Mukhlid al-Shaybani, Kitab al-Sunnah (al-Maktab al-Islami; ۱st edition, ۱۴۰۰ H) [annotator: Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani], vol. ۲, p. ۵۶۵, ۱۱۸۸

:the Ummah generally would betray 'Ali after him. Imam al-Hakim (d. ٤٠٣ H) records

حدثنا أبو حفص عمر بن أحمد الجمحي بمكه ثنا علي بن عبد العزيز ثنا عمرو بن عون ثنا هشيم عن إسماعيل بن سالم عن أبي إدريس الأودي عن علي رضي الله عنه قال إن مما عهد إلي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أن الأمه ستغدر بي بعده

Abu Hafs 'Umar b. Ahmad al-Jamhi – 'Ali b. 'Abd al-'Aziz – 'Amr b. 'Awn – Hushaym – :Isma'il b. Salim – Abu Idris al-Awdi – 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him

Verily, part of what the Prophet, peace be upon him, told me is that the Ummah" (would soon betray me after him."(١

:Al-Hakim says

هذا حديث صحيح الإسناد

(This hadith has a sahih chain.(٢

:Imam al-Dhahabi (d. ٧٤٨ H) agrees

صحيح

(Sahih(٣

:Al-Hakim also reports

عن حيان الأسدي سمعت عليا يقول قال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن الأمه ستغدر بك بعدي وأنت تعيش على ملتي وتقتل على سنتي من أحبك أحبني ومن أبغضك أبغضني وإن هذه ستخضب من هذا يعني لحيته من رأسه

:Narrated Hayyan al-Asadi

I heard 'Ali saying: The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said to me: "Verily, the Ummah will soon betray you after me; and you will live upon my religion, and you will be killed upon my Sunnah. Whoever loves you loves me, and whoever hates you hates me. Verily, this will soon be painted from this", he meant: his beard (will be drained (with blood) from his head.(٤

:Then he again declares

صحيح

(Sahih)[5]

:And al-Dhahabi, once more, concurs with him

صحيح

(Sahih)[6]

Al-Hafiz Ibn

۱- Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah al-Hakim al-Naysaburi, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Sahihayn (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah; ۱st edition, ۱۴۱۱ H) [annotator: Mustafa 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata], vol. ۳, p. ۱۵۰, ۴۶۷۶

۲- Ibid

۳- Ibid

۴- Ibid, vol. ۳, p. ۱۵۳, ۴۶۸۶

۵- Ibid

۶- Ibid

:Hajar al-'Asqalani (d. ۸۵۲ H) copies as well

حدثنا الفضل هو أبو نعيم ، ثنا فطر بن خليفه ، أخبرنى حبيب بن أبى ثابت، قال: سمعت ثعلبه بن يزيد، قال :سمعت عليا رضى الله عنه، يقول : والله إنه لعهد النبى الأمى صلى الله عليه وسلم: سيغدرونک من بعدى

:Al-Faḍl, Abu Na'im – Fitr b. Khalifah – Habib b. Abi Thabit – Tha'labah b. Yazid

I heard 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, saying: "I swear by Allah, verily, the Ummi Prophet, peace be upon him, told me: "They will soon betray you after me."(۱)

:The Salafi annotator, 'Abd Allah al-Shahri, comments

فالحديث حسن لغيره

The hadith is hasan li ghayrihi.(۲)

And they did betray him immediately after the death of the Messenger of Allah, exactly as prophesied. The Ansar opted to take advantage of their numerical and military powers by installing one of their members, instead of pledging allegiance to the divinely designated khalifah. They were staging a coup. But, they did not succeed, thanks to the early intervention of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. Meanwhile, Abu Bakr and 'Umar themselves were supposed to be on their way to faraway Palestine at that very moment, as foot soldiers under the command of Usamah. They both however defied the Prophet's conscription order, and refused to leave al-Madinah or to join the marching army. Moreover, rather than pledging allegiance to the khalifah of the Messenger, the duo successfully won the Ansar to their side and seized the political khilafah! To use contemporary terms, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, with

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۱ - Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Hajar al-'Asqalani, al-Matalib al-'Aliyah bi Zawaid al-Masanid al-Thamaniyyah (Riyadh: Dar al-'Asimah; ۱st edition, ۱۴۲۰ H) [annotator: 'Abd Allah b. Zafir b. 'Abd Allah al-Shahri], vol. ۱۶, p. ۶۴, ۳۹۱۹

۲ - Ibid, vol. ۱۶, p. ۶۷, ۳۹۲۱

the backing of the Ansar, staged a successful coup against ‘Ali, who had earlier been declared khalifah by Muhammad himself – apparently, on the Order of Allah. No wonder, Imam ‘Ali called both Abu Bakr and ‘Umar traitors and dishonest liars. Imam :Muslim quotes ‘Umar saying to him (i.e. ‘Ali) and ‘Abbas

فلما توفى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال أبو بكر أنا ولى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ... فرأيتماه كاذبا آثما غادرا خائنا والله يعلم إنه لصادق بار راشد تابع للحق ثم توفى أبو بكر وأنا ولى رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم وولى أبا بكر فرأيتمانى كاذبا آثما غادرا خائنا

When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, died, Abu Bakr said: “I am the wali of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him” ... So both of you (‘Ali and ‘Abbas) thought him (i.e. Abu Bakr) to be a liar, sinful, A TRAITOR and dishonest. And Allah knows that he was really truthful, pious, rightly-guided and a follower of the truth. Abu Bakr died and I became the wali of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and the wali of Abu Bakr. So both of you thought me to be a liar, sinful, A TRAITOR and (dishonest.(١

:But, is that why someone said this

لو قد مات عمر لقد بايعت فلانا فوالله ما كانت بيعه أبى بكر إلا فلته فتمت

When ‘Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to so-and-so, for, I swear by Allah, the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr

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١- Abu al-Husayn Muslim b. al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi, Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-‘Arabi) [annotator: Muhammad Fuad ‘Abd al-Baqi], vol. ٣, p. ١٣٧۶, ١٧٥٧

.was nothing but an error and it succeeded

It was undeniably an “error”. However, it succeeded. In other words, it was illegal. The Ummah should not have done it. But, it succeeded and gave him power nonetheless. So, the people obeyed him. What is more interesting here is ‘Umar’s response to this :statement

ألا وإنها قد كانت كذلك ولكن الله وقى شرها

.No doubt, IT WAS SURELY LIKE THAT. However, Allah saved from its EVIL

This is the man, who was the most instrumental in bringing Abu Bakr to power, confessing that the pledge of allegiance given to him was surely an “evil” error. However, according to him, Allah saved from its “evil”. So, that somehow justifies it, in his view! But, has Allah really saved the Ummah from the “evil” of the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr? When one considers how it has divded us into sects, some killing the others because of it, then one sees that its “evil” clearly still lives with .us

truly means “error”(١), the Ahl al- (فلته) Meanwhile, even though the word used faltah Sunnah do not like that meaning. They prefer one of its other meanings, as al-Hafiz :does

قوله) فوالله ما كانت بيعه أبى بكر إلا فلته (بفتح الفاء وسكون اللام بعدها مثناه ثم تاء تأنيت أى فجأه

His statement (I swear by Allah, the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr was (nothing but a faltah), meaning a SURPRISE.(٢

In other words, the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr was “a surprise” to the generality of the

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Dr. Rohi Baalbaki, al-Mawrid: A Modern Arabic-English Dictionary (Beirut: Dar - ١ al-‘Ilm li al-Malayin; ٧th edition, ١٩٩٥ CE), p. ٨٣٣; Hans Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern

Written Arabic, ed. J. Milton Cowan (Ithaca, New York: Spoken Languages Services; ٣rd edition, ١٩٧۶ CE), p. ٧٢٥

٢ - Shihab al-Din Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (Beirut: Dar al-Ma’rifah li al-Taba’ah wa al-Nashr; ٢nd edition), vol. ١٢, p. ١٢٩.

Sahabah. When they heard about it, they wondered: how come? Well, even this meaning of faltah, which the Sunnis prefer, still supports our position. Why was the rise of Abu Bakr to power “a surprise”, as ‘Umar himself testified? If he had been leading the Sahabah in salat, and this had somehow translated into his appointment as khalifah-designate, why then would anyone find the pledge of allegiance given to ?him surprising

After all, all the Sahabah would have been expecting him to assume the khilafah, if the Sunni claims had been true. In fact, it would have been the other way round: they would have been surprised if anyone else, other than Abu Bakr, had received the pledge of allegiance. So, apparently, the Sahabah were NOT expecting Abu Bakr to be the khalifah immediately after the Messenger of Allah. This was why it was “a surprise” to them when they heard his name being linked with the khilafah! However, he had already secured the allegiance of the Islamic army, and literally held the military power of the Ummah. Therefore, the Sahabah were presented with only a fiat .accompli

But, this definition of al-Hafiz does not explain the evil nature of Abu Bakr’s authority. The fact that something is a “surprise” does not necessarily make it “evil”. By contrast, when it is “illegal”, then it is necessarily “evil”. ‘Umar himself described the pledge of :allegiance sworn to Abu Bakr with evil

ألا وإنها قد كانت كذلك ولكن الله وقى شرها

No doubt, IT WAS

p: ٩٠

.SURELY LIKE THAT. However, Allah saved from ITS EVIL

These words of ‘Umar are extremely significant, indeed. He was the staunchest supporter and defender of Abu Bakr’s rule. The fact that even he qualified that same regime of his role model with “evil” reveals that the matter was so glaring that denying it would do no good. He instead merely offered a blind defence: Allah saved from “its evil”. Of course, its evil still rules the world of Islam today – with rapidly growing sectarian killings spreading everywhere. Everything, all this evil, stemmed from the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr, by the Ansar, at Saqifah on that .fateful day

:Umar also added‘

وإنهـا قـد كانت كـذلك ولكن الله وقى شـرها وليس فيكم من تقطع الأعناق إليه مثل أبى بكر من بايع رجلا من غير مشوره من المسلمين فلا يتابع هو ولا الذى تابعه تغره أن يقتلا

No doubt, it was surely like that. However, Allah saved from its evil. And there is none amongst you towards whom throats are slit like Abu Bakr. Whosoever pledges allegiance to anyone without consultation with the Muslims, then neither that person nor the person to whom the pledge of allegiance was given, is to be supported. .Rather, they both should be killed

Here, he mentioned the exact method through which Abu Bakr came to power. ‘Umar, his colleagues and the Ansar pledged allegiance to him without consulting the other Muslims. The son of al-Khattab then recommended the death sentence for whosoever achieved the khilafah again through the

Abu Bakr" method. Such a khalifah and all his supporters should be executed. This is" very telling, especially on the meaning of faltah in the athar. If the "Abu Bakr" method had been legal, then whosoever adopted it would not have deserved death. So, it was .illegal, and therefore "an error", which bore "evil" for this Ummah

In any case, whether faltah is translated as "error" or "surprise", the direct implication is still that the Sahabah were not expecting Abu Bakr to become their khalifah. Imagine: would this have been the case if all those Sunni claims about Abu Bakr – including his alleged leadership of salat and its overstretched implications – had been ?true

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In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

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.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

:Address of the central office
Isfahan, Abdorazaq St, Haj Mohammad JafarAbadei Alley, Shahid Mohammad HasanTavakkoly Alley, Number plate ۱۲۹, first floor
Website: www.ghbook.ir
Email: Info@ghbook.ir
Central office Tel: ۰۳۱۳۴۴۹۰۱۲۵
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